

Central Bedfordshire
Council
Priory House
Monks Walk
Chicksands,
Shefford SG17 5TQ



please ask for Bernard Carter
direct line 0300 300 4175
date 16 June 2011

NOTICE OF MEETING

CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date & Time

Tuesday, 28 June 2011, 10.00 a.m.

Venue at

**The Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk,
Shefford**

Richard Carr
Chief Executive

To: The Chairman and Members of the CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:

Cllrs Mrs D B Gurney (Chairman), N B Costin (Vice-Chairman), P N Aldis, Mrs S Clark, A L Dodwell, P Hollick, K Janes, I A MacKilligan, R B Pepworth and A Shadbolt

[Named Substitutes:

D Bowater, P A Duckett, Mrs S A Goodchild, Ms C Maudlin and N J Sheppard]

Co-optees: Ms Beattie (Parent Governor), Ms Copley (Parent Governor), Ms Image (Roman Catholic Diocese), Mr Landman (Parent Governor) and Mr Reynolds (Church of England Diocese)

All other Members of the Council - on request

**MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND THIS
MEETING**

AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence and notification of substitute members

2. **Minutes**

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 24 May 2011 and to note actions taken since that meeting.

3. **Members' Interests**

To receive from Members any declarations and the nature thereof in relation to:-

- (a) personal interests in any agenda item
- (b) personal and prejudicial interests in any agenda item
- (c) any political whip in relation to any agenda item.

4. **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

To receive any announcements from the Chairman and any matters of communication.

5. **Petitions**

To receive petitions from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Annex 2 of Part A4 of the Constitution.

6. **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

To receive any questions, statements or deputations from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Annex 1 of part A4 of the Constitution.

7. **Call-In**

To consider any decision of the Executive referred to this Committee for review in accordance with Procedure Rule 10.10 of Part D2.

8. **Requested Items**

To consider any items referred to the Committee at the request of a Member under Procedure Rule 3.1 of Part D2 of the Constitution.

Reports

Item	Subject	Page Nos.
9	Corporate Parenting Annual Report The report sets out the work of the Corporate Parenting Panel during 2010/2011.	* 11 - 20
10	Children's Trust Annual Report The report presents to Members the Annual report of the Children's Trust which sets out progress in delivering the priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan.	* 21 - 108
11	Post 16 Transport Consultation The report asks for Scrutiny to discuss the responses to the consultation on proposed changes to the Post 16 Transport Policy which was agreed by the Council's Executive on 15 th March 2011.	* 109 - 130
12	Work Programme 2011 - 2012 & Executive Forward Plan The report provides Members with details of the currently drafted Committee work programme and the latest Executive Forward Plan.	* 131 - 148

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CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in The Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 24 May 2011

PRESENT

Cllr Mrs D B Gurney (Chairman)
Cllr N B Costin (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:	P N Aldis Mrs S Clark A L Dodwell P Hollick	Councillors:	K Janes I A MacKilligan R B Pepworth
Parental Co-optees:	H Copley D Landman		
Church of England Co-optee:	J Reynolds		
Roman Catholic Co-optee:	Mrs F Image		
Apologies for Absence:	Cllr	Mr B Sear A Shadbolt	
		Mr B Sear	
Substitutes:	Cllr	D Bowater (In place of A Shadbolt)	
Members in Attendance:	Cllrs	Mrs A Barker Dr R Egan Mrs S A Goodchild J G Jamieson D Jones J Murray M A G Versallion	Deputy Executive Member for Children's Services Leader of the Council and Chairman of the Executive Executive Member for Children's Services
Officers in Attendance:	Mr B Carter		Corporate Scrutiny & Research Manager
	Mrs E Grant		Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services
	Mr R Parsons		Head of School Organisation and Capital Planning
	Helen Redding		Head of SEN and Inclusion

CS/11/1 **Minutes**

RESOLVED

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Childrens's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 29 March 2011 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to an amendment to the title of Mr J Reynolds as a Church of England Co-optee and not a Roman Catholic Co-optee.

CS/11/2 **Members' Interests**

(a) **Personal Interests**

Cllrs N Costin, A Dodwell, Dr R Egan, S Goodchild, D Jones, P Hollick & R Pepworth all declared a personal interest in Items 9 and/or 10, as did the Church of England co-optee, J Reynolds.

(b) **Personal and Prejudicial Interests**

There were no declarations made.

(c) **Political Whip**

There were no declarations made.

CS/11/3 **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Chairman had no announcements or communications.

CS/11/4 **Petitions**

No petitions were received from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Annex 2 of Part A4 of the Constitution.

CS/11/5 **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

The Chairman confirmed that no questions, statements or deputations from members of the public had been received in accordance with Public Participation Procedure as set out in Annex 1 of Part A4 of the Constitution.

CS/11/6 **Call-In**

No decisions from the Executive were referred to the Committee for review in accordance with Procedure Rule 10.10 of Part D2.

CS/11/7 **Requested Items**

No items were referred to the Committee for consideration at the request of a Member under Procedure Rule 3.1 of Part D2 of the Constitution.

CS/11/8 **Outcomes of the Review of Transforming Teaching and Learning in Dunstable and Houghton Regis**

The Executive Member for Children's Services introduced his report, which set out the outcome of the review of school organisation in Dunstable and Houghton Regis, as informed by the Council's Education Vision, and described the options by which the aspirations of this vision could be achieved. The Executive Member further explained his rationale for recommending Option 1 as his preferred option, which in his opinion reflected the latest education policy for school improvement, the increasing independence of schools from the local authority and the Council's responsibility to support underperforming schools.

The Committee then received representations from 2 speakers, as follows:-

1. Mr V Dunnell, Parent Governor at St Christopher's Lower School, Dunstable, who expressed concerns regarding the consultation process with parents in recent proposals made by schools where the Council is not necessarily the decision maker; and
2. Cllr S Goodchild, who referenced the Council's vision as a good document and supported consideration of Option 4, if the overriding imperative was to raise educational standards, and challenged the Executive to consider what success would look like.

There followed debate amongst Members of the Committee and the Executive Member for Children's Services regarding the merits and demerits of the 4 options contained within the report. The key issues raised during this debate included:-

- The freedom of schools and academies to choose their own delivery structures and the need for the local authority to trust parents, governors and teachers in making those choices;
- The financial constraints facing the local authority and the need to be realistic within these constraints;
- The perceived lack of serious consideration of Option 4 (and other two tier options) due to financial constraints;
- The difficulties of encouraging schools to co-operate and form hard federations;
- Issues of deprivation, and how best to address them within school structures;

- The changed strategic role of the local authority in light of the increasing number of schools moving to academy status;
- The need for the Council to be creative and a force for good if federations are to be effective; and
- The pastoral care of children moving through the school system;

No consensus was reached during the debate however the following recommendation was moved and seconded:-

1. That Option 4 is considered to have more merit in raising educational standards than Option 1;
2. That Option 1 is not considered to meet the needs of our children; and
3. That Options 3 & 4 should be further considered by the Executive and educational reasons given why either should not be favoured over option 1.

A recorded vote was requested, the result being:-

For:- Cllrs K Janes, P Hollick, N Aldis, Mrs S Clark, N Costin and Parent Co-optee H Copley

Against:- Cllrs D Bowater, I Mackilligan, R Pepworth & A Dodwell

Abstained:- Parent Co-optee D Landman, Church of England Co-optee J Reynolds & Roman Catholic Co-optee Mrs F Image

Accordingly the recommendation was carried.

RECOMMENDATION TO EXECUTIVE

1. **that Option 4 is considered to have more merit in raising educational standards than Option 1;**
2. **that Option 1 is not considered to meet the needs of our children; and**
3. **that Options 3 & 4 should be further considered by the Executive and educational reasons given why either should not be favoured over option 1.**

CS/11/9

The Future of Special Schooling in the South of Central Bedfordshire

The Executive Member for Children's Services introduced his report, which summarised the responses received to the consultation on the future of special schooling in the south of Central Bedfordshire that was initiated by the Executive at its meeting on 11 January 2011. The Executive Member further explained his rationale for recommending that the Executive agrees to publish statutory notices for the merger of Hillcrest, Weatherfield and Glenwood special schools at its meeting on 31 May 2011.

The Committee then received representations from 3 speakers, as follows:-

1. Mr J Selmes, Headteacher of Weatherfield School, who opposed the proposed merger;

2. Mr P Skingley, Headteacher of Hillcrest School, who supported the proposed merger; and
3. Cllr J Murray, who believed parents had not been given sufficient opportunity to have their voices heard.

There followed debate amongst Members of the Committee and the Executive Member for Children's Services regarding the merits and demerits of the proposed merger. The key issues raised during this debate included:-

- The informal consultation process adopted prior to the publication of statutory notices (if agreed by the Executive);
- An acknowledgement that one particular school opposed the merger;
- The advantages and disadvantages of area special schools in general;
- Concerns regarding accommodating children with moderate learning difficulties within the proposed merger;
- The need for all three schools to work together regardless of the proposed merger;
- The recent news (received on 23 May 2011) that Weatherfield School had applied for academy status, and the impact this would have on the proposed merger;
- With regard to the application for academy status, the need to liaise with the Department for Education to assess merger options and timing issues; and
- The imperative for the Executive to make a decision regarding the publication of statutory notices at its meeting on 31 May so that a final outcome was known before the start of the new school term in September 2011.

Following the debate and as a result of the news relating to the application for academy status by Weatherfield School, Members of the Committee also discussed the possibility of recommending a merger between Glenwood and Hillcrest schools only.

RECOMMENDATION TO EXECUTIVE

That, whilst the Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee is minded to support the merger of all 3 special schools in south Central Bedfordshire, in the event of Weatherfield School becoming an academy school, the Executive considers publishing statutory notices to merge the 2 remaining schools (i.e. Glenwood and Hillcrest).

CS/11/10

Work Programme 2011 - 2012 & Executive Forward Plan

Members considered the report of the Chief Executive, which provided details of the Committee's current work programme and Executive Forward Plan. Members also noted that its next meeting would now be held on 28 June 2011 rather than the 20 June 2011 as originally scheduled to accommodate the post 16 Transport consultation timetable.

RESOLVED that

- 1. The next meeting be held on Tuesday, 28 June 2011 at 10 am; and**
- 2. The Children's Services OSC Work Programme be noted.**

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at 12.45 p.m.)

Chairman

Dated

Meeting: Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 27 June 2011

Subject: **The Report of the Corporate Parenting Panel for the year 2010 - 2011**

Report of: **Cllr Mark Versallion, Executive Member for Children's Services**

Summary: This report sets out the work of the Corporate Parenting Panel during 2010/2011. Members will note that it demonstrates robust Corporate Parenting arrangements are in place in Central Bedfordshire Council. The Chairman has agreed that following discussion of the report, Mr Brian Roberts from the Foster Carers Alliance will be available to discuss with Members of the Committee his own perspective about Central Bedfordshire's Corporate Parenting.

Advising Officer: Edwina Grant, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services

Contact Officer: Catherine Parry, Assistant Director, Children's Services Operations.

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

This report directly supports Priority 2 of Central Bedfordshire's Strategic Plan 2009-2011, Educating, Protecting and Providing Opportunities for Children and Young People (Looked After). The information also supports the delivery of the Children and Young People's Plan priorities, and in particular Priority 2, protecting children and keeping them safe and Priority 1, increased educational achievement. All the priorities relate to children who are Looked After by Central Bedfordshire Council.

Strong Corporate Parenting arrangements are central to improving all services for children and young people in care. The focus on Corporate Parenting at strategic level within Central Bedfordshire Council is delivered by The Corporate Parenting Panel, The Children in Care Council, The Children's Trust and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

All officers and Members of the Council are corporate parents and therefore responsible for Corporate Parenting in line with current legislation and guidance. The Corporate Parenting Panel meets to review actions taken.

Financial:

The services are funded through core Council budgets. This includes all costing relevant for Looked After Children's Services including placements, health, education provision and frontline social work teams.

Legal:

The legal framework is laid out in The Children Act 1989, Looked After and Leaving Care Act 2000, Children and Young Persons Act 2008 and new Care Planning regulations implemented nationally in April 2011.

Risk Management:

There are no new risk management implications arising from the report. The function continues to be subject to announced and unannounced inspections and preparation for this is constantly ongoing. The Annual Report mentions that there were no unannounced inspections during the time covered. This is correct. An unannounced inspection was published in May 2011 and will be included in the 2011/12 report.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

There are no new staffing implications arising from this report. The current resources deployed enable the service to deliver all of its statutory responsibilities.

Equalities/Human Rights:

The service will respond to the recommendations of an Equality Impact Assessment currently being undertaken. This will influence service planning and review 2011 -12.

Community Safety:

There are no new community safety implications arising from this report.

Sustainability:

There are no new sustainability implications arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1. That the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee:**
 - (a) note the Annual Report of the Corporate Parenting Panel 2010 – 2011 (Appendix 1);**
 - (b) advise the Corporate Parenting Panel of any issues they may wish to focus on during the ensuing year; and**
 - (c) Following discussion of the Report, ask Mr Brian Roberts any questions they may have about his perception of foster caring in Central Bedfordshire.**

Background Information

1. The Annual report of the Corporate Parenting Panel (Appendix 1) outlines the delivery of the Looked After Children's Services and allows the Council to demonstrate that it has delivered its Corporate Parenting responsibilities for the municipal year.
2. A good Corporate Parent must offer everything that a good parent would, including stability. It must address both the difficulties which children in care experience and the challenges of parenting within a complex system of different services. It is also important that children have a chance to influence and shape the parenting they receive. The Corporate Parenting Panel has challenged and supported the services delivered and commented on their effectiveness of provision for the Looked After children and young people of Central Bedfordshire throughout 2010 – 2011.
3. 'Care Matters a time for change' (2007) set out the Government's commitment to all Looked after Children, to secure improved and sustainable outcomes for children in care. The Corporate Parenting Panel works to this guidance.
4. The outcomes that Central Bedfordshire aspires to are set out by what was then the Department of Children and Families, now the Department for Education that said: **"Our Aspirations for children in care are no less than those each parent has for their own children. Children in care are often in much greater need than other children but much less likely to get the help they require. We aim to create a care system that provides every child with a safe, happy, healthy, secure and loving childhood, nurturing their aspirations and enabling them to fulfil their potential."**
5. These aspirations have subsequently been incorporated into the new national Care Planning regulations launched in April 2011.
6. The updated Care Planning regulations 2011 further support the implementation of the Care Matters themes setting them into a statutory framework from April.
7. Through the inspection regime, the Council will need to demonstrate that the regulations have been adopted. Policies and procedures are under regular review to ensure the regulations are adopted in Central Bedfordshire Council.

Corporate Parenting

8. Terms of reference for the Corporate Parenting Panel are currently being revised in accordance with new Statutory Guidance and will be placed on the Web when agreed.

9. In order to measure, monitor and evaluate changes and improvements made throughout the year a performance framework inclusive of key indicators is subject to internal monitoring and review via the Corporate Parenting Panel. This information will be collated and presented to Overview and Scrutiny as part of the next annual year end report. This will support and not replace the regular performance information that comes to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
10. The Corporate Parenting Panel met on the 25th March and agreed several key areas for improvement for this next municipal year. These are outlined in point 16 of the year end report attached as Appendix 1. These will form the basis of the Corporate Parenting Panel's work plan for this year.
11. The Corporate Parenting Panel will be keep its work plan for 2011 -2012 under regular review to ensure ongoing monitoring, evaluation and development of the service for Looked After Children in Central Bedfordshire. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may wish to suggest areas of enquiry.

Children in Care Council Work plan

12. Central Bedfordshire Council have a secure and active Children in Care Council (CiCC), whose work plan is agreed and reported to the Corporate Parenting Panel 3 times a year. The CiCC meet with the Corporate Parenting Panel at these times. This plan will ensure the most vulnerable children being supported by the Council have an opportunity to air their views and influence service delivery.

The Pledge

13. Central Bedfordshire CiCC developed the current pledge in partnership with all Looked After Children. It is a Pledge that outlines the Council's offer to its Looked After Children and is a core element of the information given to all the children and young people when coming into care. The CiCC will review this and report to the Corporate Parenting Panel this year.

Children's Trust/Local Safeguarding Board

14. The Children's Trust and the Local Safeguarding Board will continue to ensure that services for the most vulnerable of the Council's clients continue to be robust and improved in line with updated procedures and statutory guidance through challenge of the delivery groups reporting directly to them.

Conclusion and Next Steps

15. The Committee is requested to note The Year End Report as published on the Council's website and make comments on any issues they think that the Corporate Parenting Panel may wish to focus on in the coming year.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - The Year end Review of the Corporate Parenting Panel for 2010 - 2011

Appendix 1 Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report

1. Executive Summary

This report summarises the work on Looked After Children's service delivery in Children's Services in Central Bedfordshire. It includes a profile of the service and its delivery. It describes the work of the Corporate Parenting Panel and Children in Care Council and outlines the partnership work ongoing to support the service to improve outcomes for children, particularly in the areas of health, education and the participation of young people. This report will be published on line on the Council's website at the end of the municipal year and will be reviewed by the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the next municipal year for them to comment and make any suggestions to the Corporate Parenting Panel that they wish them to take account of in the ensuing year.

2. Activity of the Corporate Parenting Panel

The Corporate Parenting Panel has met regularly throughout the year according to the Council diary.

During the municipal year 2010/11, the panel has considered the role of the corporate parent in Central Bedfordshire; drawn up and agreed a pledge for a delivery to young people in consultation with children and young people; and considered the service information and status of delivery activities for Looked After Children alongside the Care Matters agenda. It has met its objectives set for this year. It particularly enjoyed the meetings where the Panel engaged with the young people themselves.

The Corporate Parenting Panel has been instrumental in supporting the successful "Looked After Children Achievement Awards" and has worked in championing the needs of Looked After Children across the Council.

The Corporate Parenting Panel has welcomed the advice of foster parents on the panel and their ability to reflect on day to day issues of concern and their comments on areas of improvement.

3. Profile of the Looked After and Leaving Care Service.

The Committee has considered the profile of the Looked After and Leaving Care Children and young people. It has noted performance information and has received a presentation on the rates of referral of young people and the impact on the Council's budget of this.

4. Profile of the Children and Young People

The Committee is aware of the age, ethnicity, and baseline data held regarding Looked After Children.

The numbers for April 2009 – March 2010 and April 2010 to February 2011 are shown below.

April 2009 - March 2010

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Number of LAC	136	141	151	156	151	160	162	162	162	155	157	160
Rate per 10,000	24	25	27	27	27	28	29	29	29	27	28	28

April 2010 - February 2011

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
Number of LAC	167	169	176	180	176	176	178	180	169	170	174
Rate per 10,000	29	30	31	32	31	31	31	32	30	30	31

April 2009 - March 2010

Placement Type	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Foster	63	64	68	66	62	58	57	57	54	53	52	55
Residential	12	12	14	12	10	14	15	14	17	13	15	15
Externally Commissioned Placements	75	76	82	78	72	72	72	71	71	66	67	70
% of LAC in Externally Commissioned Placements	55%	54%	54%	50%	48%	45%	44%	44%	44%	43%	43%	44%

April 2010 - February 2011

Placement Type	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb
Foster	63	65	69	71	71	69	72	72	64	64	67
Residential	16	19	19	19	22	22	20	20	21	20	22
Externally Commissioned Placements	79	84	88	90	93	91	92	92	85	84	89
% of LAC in Externally Commissioned Placements	47%	50%	50%	50%	53%	52%	52%	51%	50%	49%	51%

Interim Care Orders:

1st April 2009 – 31st March 2010 – 30
1st April 2010 – 28th February 2011 - 26

5. Work of the Children in Care Council

The Children in Care Council has undertaken a number of activities during the period covered by the report and the participation officer has worked to support this through the year. It has included national and regional events. They have held a joint meeting with the Corporate Parenting Panel.

6. Work done in line with Care Matters objectives

Preventative work for children on the edge of care has not been a particular focus of the panel this year and will form part of the work in 2011/12. The Council has agreed its Child Poverty and Early Intervention strategy. These strategies will be considered by the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee. However, early intervention for the young people on the edge of care will be considered by the Corporate Parenting Panel in the next municipal year.

7. Health

The health of Looked After Children has been considered. Areas for development, including improved access to health services and dentistry have been highlighted. The Director of Public Health will develop this work with the Panel in 2011/12.

8. Education

The education outcomes of Looked After Children have been considered. The Committee welcomes the work done by the "Virtual School" to support Looked After Children. It notes that the activity of the "Virtual School" has been transferred to sit within the School Improvement Teams in the Children's Services directorate and that the "Virtual School" will have an allocated school support partner to support it in Summer 2011. The Committee will consider the outcomes in education for Looked After Children in Autumn 2011 after the 2011 results are known.

9. Placements and Commissioning

The work on placements and commissioning of places for Looked After Children has been developed within Children's Services this year and will be a focus for next year. Data and trends in anonymised casework commissioning have been useful in broadening the knowledge of the Panel. Improved local quality measures on successful commissioning will be developed to enable the Corporate Parenting Panel to take a view on further improving outcomes for Looked After young people.

10. Adoption Activity Municipal Year 2010/2011

The Corporate Parenting Panel is aware that the Adoption Panel has met throughout the year and 7 Central Bedfordshire children have been recommended to be placed for adoption. The Adoption Panel recommended that Placement Orders should be sought in relation to all of these children.

On approvals, the Adoption Panel recommended that 9 households were suitable to adopt a child (of these applicants, all attended the panel personally).

In terms of matching young people to placements, the Adoption Panel recommended that 5 Central Bedfordshire children should be placed with selected adopters.

3 children have moved into adoptive placements but are not yet adopted.

11. Fostering Activity

The Corporate Parenting Panel is aware that the Fostering and Permanence Panels met through the year and recommended that 24 households should be approved as foster carer households.

Of the 24 newly approved foster carers, 3 were approved for the Family Link Scheme, 1 for the Family Link Fee Paid Scheme, 7 as short-term carers, 5 as long term or permanent carers and 8 as "Family and Friends" carers. There were no carers approved for the Youth Care Scheme.

There were 23 fostering households de-registered during 2009/10. The reasons for de-registration varied and included personal circumstances, ill health, retirement and re-location. 12 of the carers who were de-registered were Family and Friends carers who had either secured Special Guardianships for the children and young people in their care or, the young people had reached the age of 18 and were therefore no longer termed "Looked After".

On "In House" placements: 37 new placements were arranged. 32 placements were ended.

Independent Fostering Arrangements: 28 new placements (all either sibling groups or teenagers), 15 placements were ended.

12. Transition into Adulthood

In consultation with the Director of Adult Social Care, Health and Housing, who is a member of this Board, we will consider in 2011/12 how to further improve plans for young people's transition into adulthood.

13. Statutory review process

The Corporate Parenting Panel has noted that the statutory independent review process is in place and challenge or trends noted through reviews of young people are monitored through the year. Any necessary changes arising out of reviews have been made.

14. Notifications to Ofsted.

These notifications are made in any cases where there is significant harm to a

Looked After Child, or there is significant media interest in respect of a Looked After Child's case.

There have been no notifications made during the period covered by the report.

15. Inspection

There has been no announced inspection in the period. On going operational work has been undertaken by the Children's Services staff to continue to build on the learning from the previous inspection and to ensure that the service is "inspection ready" for the future.

16. Key areas for improvement and particular focus for next municipal year for the monitoring work of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

1. Consider how to improve the educational attainment for Looked After Children.
2. Consider, with the Director of Public Health, how to improve access to Health provision for Looked After Children.
3. Further improve service user participation both for Looked After Children, foster carers and existing and potential adoptive parents.
4. To be an early point of reference to inform a review of provision for disabled young people scheduled to go to Scrutiny and Executive in November 2011/January 2012.
5. To monitor the implementation of the Care Planning regulations and Guidance that are due to be implemented nationally from April 2011.
6. To hold the Lead Member and the Director of Children's Services to account on how they are working with the Children's Trust partners to deliver good outcomes for Children and Young People Looked After.
7. To receive a report towards the end of the municipal year 2011/12 on what improvements have been made on commissioning for good outcomes for children who are looked after.

17. Priorities and forward plan for the links between Corporate Parenting Panel and the Children in Care Council

To be agreed with the Children in Care Council at a meeting early in the municipal year 2011/12.

Appendix A

The Corporate Parenting Panel will, on behalf of the Members and officers of the Council, provide challenge and support the working of the Council in:

- Improving the life chances of children in public care, so that they develop into healthy, active, participating and contributing citizens.
- Working with Health and other services to ensure that services are of a high standard.
- Raising the profile of Looked after children and young people across the Council and ensuring that their needs are taken into account in the decision making processes.
- Ensuring young people's participation in and the functioning of the Children in Care Council.
- Ensuring that the pledge for Looked after children is in place and meaningful.
- Making sure that looked after children know what to expect, that the relevant statutory requirements are fully met and that they have access to advocacy, support and complaints processes.
- Overseeing quantitative and qualitative data in relating to looked after children and to pass any comments on the performance to the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Ensuring that an appropriate range of placements is available.
- Holding the Executive Member for Children's Services and the Director of Children's Service to account for operational provision for looked after children.
- Receiving and acting upon any request from the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding matters that fall under the remit of that Committee.
- Referring to the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee any matters that are under the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Meeting: Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date: 28 June 2011
Subject: Children's Trust Annual Report
Report of: Councillor Mark Versallion, Executive Member for Children's Services
Summary: The report presents to Members the Annual report of the Children's Trust which sets out progress in delivering the priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan.

Advising Officer: Edwina Grant, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services
Contact Officer: Sylvia Gibson, Assistant Director Learning and Strategic Commissioning
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The Children and Young People's Plan supports the Council deliver the following Council priorities:

- Educating, protecting and providing opportunities for children and young people.
- Creating safer communities.
- Promoting healthier lifestyles.

Financial:

Working with partners to deliver services together in a more integrated way, with a focus on prevention and early intervention is a key driver of the plan and will in the longer term deliver efficiencies. All priorities and actions are developed within partners' current resources.

Legal:

None.

Risk Management:

Risk is part of delivery planning for the Children's Plan and regular quarterly monitoring of performance supports effective risk management.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None.

Equalities/Human Rights:

During the development of the plan equalities issues and impacts were considered, and included in the priorities are a number of strategic actions which identify children and young people who are not achieving, who are excluded or in vulnerable circumstances. An Equalities Impact Assessment was completed alongside the development of the Plan.

Community Safety:

Protecting children and keeping them safe is a priority in the new Children and Young People's Plan which contributes to delivering safer communities.

Sustainability:

Sustainable schools are a priority for the Transforming Learning agenda and this has been set out in the Education Vision for Central Bedfordshire which links to the Children and Young People's Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **that**
 - (a) **The progress in delivering the priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan for 2010/2011 is noted as at Appendix A; and**
 - (b) **Members record any questions or comments that they would like the Children's Trust to consider in delivering the priorities set out in the Children and Young People's Plan 2011/2014 at Appendix B.**

Background

1. The first Children and Young People Plan was agreed in September 2009 and is attached at Appendix C for information. Although a new plan was developed and agreed by the Council in 2011 it is the plan at Appendix C, which was in operation during 2010 /2011
2. Since January 2010, the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee has played a key role in scrutinising the work of the Children's Trust Delivery Groups in delivering the priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan 2009-2011.
3. The Committee has also commented on the priorities in the new plan which is now in place from 2011-2014.

The Children's Trust Annual Report

4. Progress against the priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan is reviewed annually.

5. Attached at Appendix A is the second and final annual review of the Children and Young People's Plan 2009-2011.

Conclusion

6. Members are asked to consider the Annual Report and make any comments in relation to the progress of partners in delivering the priorities in the plan for 2010/2011, and to make any comments for the Children's Trust to consider in delivering the new Children and Young People's Plan as at Appendix B.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Children's Trust Annual Report

Appendix B – Children and Young People's Plan 2011-2014

Appendix C – Children and Young People's Plan 2009-2011

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

Children and Young People's Plan: Overview and Scrutiny Comments (Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 14 September 2010)

Location of papers: Priory House, Chicksands

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**Central Bedfordshire Children and Young People's Plan
2009-2011**

Annual Report: March 2011

Introduction

This is the second review of the Central Bedfordshire Children and Young People's Plan 2009-2011.

Our progress so far

Progress - getting the building blocks in place

In the second year of the development of the Children's Trust, partners have concentrated on embedding the working arrangements and further developing partnership working in a number of areas. These have included:

- Reviewing the membership of the Children's Trust Board and inviting a range of new members. Those attending now include representatives from schools, Diocesan Boards of Education, the Youth Offending Service, Central Bedfordshire College, the Youth Parliament and the Fire Service.
- Partners committing to continue to work as a Children's Trust and agreeing a refreshed Children and Young People's Plan.
- An Ofsted Assessment which highlighted the good progress made in establishing strategic partnerships and in identifying priorities to improve outcomes for all children, young people and their families. The Assessment also noted that the Children and Young People's Plan was a good analysis of the strengths of local provision, with clear actions for further improvement and ambitious targets.
- Partners on the Commissioning Group working together to review the commission for the Pupil Referral Unit and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment in order to identify priorities for the refreshed Children and Young People's Plan.
- Consulting with over 4,000 young people to understand their priorities for the new Children and Young People's plan.
- Developing a Child Poverty Strategy: From poverty to prosperity.
- The Workforce Development Strategic Group agreeing learning and development needs in order to support the delivery of the refreshed Children and Young People's Plan.

Challenges during the year

- Keeping abreast of new guidance and national policy frameworks and addressing the implications for partnership working and service delivery.
- The difficult national economic context and the subsequent loss of Area Based Grant funding for the fourth quarter which had an impact on a range of partnership projects and partnership working.
- Capacity to maintain existing services, joint working and performance through a period of change and restructuring.

An overview of progress

Be Healthy

What were our priorities in year 2?

1. Ensure a healthy start to life – including early access to antenatal care, reducing smoking and improving nutrition in pregnancy, promoting breastfeeding and increasing immunisation and vaccinations.
2. Ensure children and young people are able to make responsible decisions in relation to drugs, alcohol and sexual health.
3. Promote, protect and treat the mental and emotional health of children and young people.
4. Support children and young people to lead healthy lifestyles including reducing smoking and childhood obesity and increasing physical activity and healthy eating.
5. Transform services for disabled children.

What difference have we made?

During 2010/11 we have:

- Increased breastfeeding rates across Central Bedfordshire.
- Continued to reduce the number of women smoking in pregnancy – achieving rates below the 15% target.
- Over-achieved the target for the number of women who access maternity services within 12 weeks and 6 days.
- Provisionally achieved our Chlamydia target to screen 35% of 15-24 year olds in 2010/11 – according to early indications.
- Improved the effectiveness of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services achieving 16 out of 16 in the Self Assessment.
- Achieved a significant increase in the uptake of immunisations across all ages.
- Over-achieved participation rates for the National Childhood Measurement Programme at both Year R and Year 6.
- Increased the number of schools achieving Healthy Schools Status from 77% to 94%.
- Increased the range and number of short break places being provided to children with disabilities from 320 to 624.

Making progress on the priorities

Priority 1

Good progress has been made on the priority to ensure a **healthy start to life**.

- The number of women **accessing maternity services in early pregnancy** (by 12 weeks 6 days) has continued to increase and the target has been exceeded in the first two quarters. Projected estimates indicate this level of performance will be maintained for Q3 and Q4.
- **Smoking in pregnancy** – rates have continued to fall and the target to achieve less than 15% of women smoking in pregnancy has been achieved
- **Coverage of feeding status at 6-8 weeks** has exceeded the target in all quarters as a result of the implementation of improved recording and routine reconciliation of child health records.

Although the target has not been met in the following areas good progress has been made to improve performance compared to previous years:

- **Breastfeeding rates** – Following the achievement of UNICEF baby friendly Status Stage 1 Accreditation by Bedfordshire Community Health Services in July 2010, the launch of 8 Baby Brasseries in Children’s Centres across Central Bedfordshire and a total of 28 peer supporters trained across Bedfordshire we have achieved consistently higher rates of women starting and continuing to breastfeed. Lower initiation rates have been identified for women delivering at Luton and Dunstable Hospital and links have been made with the midwifery department to work to improve the support given on the ward postnatally and we expect to see ongoing improvements next year. As part of the Healthy Child Programme an antenatal visit by a Health Visit is also planned to be offered to all mothers.
- A significant increase in the uptake of **childhood immunisations** was achieved in Central Bedfordshire. This has been in part due to the work undertaken to improve data quality and GP performance in 2010/11. Although not all targets were achieved there are increased efforts to improve immunisation coverage to the recommended levels and our main focus for 2011/12 is to target hard to reach/vulnerable groups and children not registered with GP practices. We anticipate seeing further gains in the year 2011/12.

Priority 2

Good progress has been made on delivering the priority **to ensure children and young people are able to make responsible decisions in relation to drugs, alcohol and sexual health**. This includes:

- **Chlamydia Screening** – Provisional data indicates that the increased target to screen 35% of 15-24 year olds in 2010/11 has been met.
- **Substance misuse** – Although the NI115 indicator is no longer reported good progress has been made around drug treatment for young people – the number of young people leaving treatment in a planned way remains well above 70%. Family focused services have been reviewed and revised following a pilot and it is anticipated that 100% of young people from Central Bedfordshire will report reduced drug and alcohol use following support.

Whilst the target for teenage pregnancy has not been met there has been a steady decrease in the conception rates for those under the age of 18 and the provisional 2009 Under-18 conception rate in Central Bedfordshire is significantly lower than the national rate in England. The provisional 2009 annual data shows a reduction of 12.6 % since the 1998 baseline with a rate of 32.5 per 1000 females under 18. There is, however, a need to continue to ensure that the overall declining rate in Central Bedfordshire does not mask some high ward rates. A key strand of the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy for Central Bedfordshire, therefore, is to continue to prioritise targeted work in ‘hotspot’ wards and amongst vulnerable groups of young people who are at an increased risk of teenage pregnancy. These include looked after children and those leaving care, youth offenders, young people with risky behaviours such as drugs and alcohol misuse. The links to deprivation and poverty are inextricable with each of the hotspot wards falling within the 20% most deprived in the Local Authority area.

Priority 3

Good progress has been made this year and the target to **promote, protect and treat the mental and emotional health of children and young people.**

Achievements include:

- Meeting the national CAMHS targets scoring 16 out of 16.
- The introduction of a new Home Treatment Scheme in September 2010 which led to a reduction (by over a third) of inpatient activity which had previously seen a significant increase.
- New NHS funded Early Intervention Service developed.
- Parenting support programmes have been delivered and an interim evaluation highlighted high overall completion rates of 83% compared to the national average of 73%.

Priority 4

Work to deliver the priority to **support children and young people to lead healthy lifestyles, including reducing smoking and childhood obesity and increasing physical activity and healthy eating** is making good progress, although there was some underperformance in progress made against the obesity targets.

- **Reducing smoking** – All but one Upper School in Central Bedfordshire have received training to provide in-house Stop Smoking Support to young people and training has also been delivered to local colleges. Data for all age groups that access NHS support is collected on the Stop Smoking Service Database, therefore enabling the ongoing monitoring of both the activity and quality of the interventions that are provided.
- **Healthy Schools** – 126 schools (94%) in Central Bedfordshire have achieved Healthy Schools Status of which 63 (50%) have maintained their status via the Annual Review. Schools will receive further information and presentation opportunities regarding the way forward for the programme, reflecting a more locally driven need, this will take place in the summer term 2011.
- Overall progress is mixed for **childhood obesity**. We have over-achieved height and weight measurement participation targets for Year R and Year 6. Childhood obesity in Year 6 has decreased from 16.0% in 2008/09 to 14.3% in 2009/10. However in Year R levels have increased from 7.3% in 2008/09 to 8.5% in 2009/10. Given the wide range of values at 95% confidence none of these changes are statistically significant and it is likely we will need a number of years' data to accurately predict trends.

Additional Beezee Bodies programmes for childhood obesity management are in place to make up for the temporary postponement of MEND (as a consequence of uncertainties within the Sports and Leisure team). In addition school based programmes such as Making the Most of Me, which seek to improve healthy eating and physical activity awareness and participation, have been successfully delivered to 4 lower schools in Central Bedfordshire to all their Year 4 pupils focusing on Physical Activity and Good Food Education. A review of the programme is underway to consider follow on work for the next academic year.

The childhood obesity work programme is being reviewed and through its prioritisation process additional funding has been identified by NHS Bedfordshire for obesity.

Priority 5

Our priority to **transform services for disabled children** has met all of the timescales required by Together for Disabled Children. There has been a significant increase in the range and number of short break places. These have been provided by in house services and a number of voluntary organisations. The options available have ranged from social club placements and play schemes to a performance of Romeo and Juliet and a circus performance for a group of children with complex needs. The additional places have been accessed by children with a wide range of abilities and disabilities.

There has been an increase in the number of parents accessing a direct payment from 44 in 2009/10 to 75 in 2010/11.

Disability awareness training has been delivered to 180 staff in play, leisure and youth services to improve access opportunities for disabled children and young people. A programme to train more workers in extended schools and childcare settings and increase access to universal provision is in place.

Additional staffing has been provided to promote additional Family Link places and additional Occupational Therapist hours have been provided to support disabled children's access to short break services. This has enabled the service to reduce the waiting times and provide equipment in a timely way.

A joint Children and Adult Services transition post has been agreed to further improve the transition process. A joint bid with Luton was submitted under the Innovation and Outcomes programme for transition for funding. The bid was successful and the funding was used to design a single assessment for disabled young people in transition and to develop a lead professional pack for transition workers.

The single assessment and the lead professional pack are now being implemented in Central Bedfordshire Council in partnership with Health colleagues.

An effective and constructive parent forum is in place. They have assisted in rewriting eligibility criteria, training staff in disability awareness, running a parent conference and supporting delivery groups and workshops. Further Government funding has been agreed to support parent participation until 2014/15.

A successful Disabled Children's Access to Child Care (DCATCH) project was completed in 2010/11. As a result of the findings specialist child care facilities are in the process of being set up which will assist parents of disabled children in returning to work, education and training. The specialist facilities will offer support to children in moving to mainstream provision.

Stay Safe

What were our priorities in year 2?

6. Protect children and young people from harm by providing a co-ordinated and effective safeguarding process.
7. Reduce the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people.
8. Reduce the incidence of and impact of bullying on children and young people.

What difference have we made?

- 95.7% of initial assessments have been completed within seven working days of referral. This exceeded the local target and is significantly better than the annual average performance both nationally and for comparator Authorities (NI 59).
- Only 5.7% of children looked after at 31 March had three or more placements during the year. This was good performance that was well below the target of 9.2% and better than national and comparator authorities (NI 62).
- The target of 100% of child protection cases which should have been reviewed during the year has been achieved (NI 67). This demonstrates clear, robust oversight of children and young people's plans to secure their safety and well being.
- Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (CBSCB) is now established and works to an agreed partnership business plan. Action plans relating to the Child J Serious Case review have been implemented and completed, demonstrating positive impact upon service delivery and frontline practice.
- The Domestic Abuse partnership continues to align Domestic Abuse activity between services focused on adults and on children and joint training is in place.
- The Cyber Mentors scheme has been commissioned. This builds on the school based mentoring scheme and can be accessed by young people through a Social Network style portal.
- A Think Family event has engaged partners with this key aspect of early intervention and prevention and a focus on linking with adult services is being taken forward 2011 – 12.
- The Children in Care Council and Corporate Parenting Panels are well established and the year end reports demonstrated positive achievements for the service and young people. A clear work plan inclusive of Children in Care council involvement is set for 2011 – 12.

Progress on the priorities

Overall progress in this outcome area is good and the Stay Safe Delivery Group completed the activities set within individual area action plans.

Performance in protecting vulnerable children and young people is good. Key indicators measuring assessment timeliness, stability and review have remained on target to year end 2011. Despite additional numbers of social workers, increased pressures on Children's Social Care frontline social work teams have impacted on our ability to achieve our target for the ratio of referrals to initial assessments (NI68). 30% more initial assessments have been completed this year, totalling 1574. The

planned replacement of the Integrated Children's System client database, with improved recording practices should help to resolve these issues in future.

In order to **continue protecting children and young people from harm by providing a co-ordinated and effective safeguarding process**, processes for identifying and responding to children whose safety is, or is likely to be, compromised are in place at each level of intervention; universal, targeted and specialist. In order to ensure that these continue to be compliant with regulation and operationally fit for purpose the following action is being taken:

- The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures are continually reviewed and updated to ensure compliance with the latest revision of the statutory guidance, as they are produced.
- Web based procedures have been made available which allow easier access and cross referencing to guidance for practitioners.
- The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) has been reviewed and revised alongside a revised referral form to Children's Social Care.

These processes provide the framework within which professionals and agencies respond to concerns about children and young people. The activity is underpinned by a comprehensive and well regarded range of training. The Performance Management and Audit group of the LSCB and the Council regularly audit casework to ensure its quality.

A separate Local Safeguarding Children Board for Central Bedfordshire (CBSCB) came into being on 1 April 2010 in line with the plan.

Revised protocols and procedures in respect of information sharing and responding to domestic abuse have been reviewed on a multi agency basis and in conjunction with the Domestic Abuse Partnership, and adopted by the Safeguarding Children Board. Research and best practice are being integrated into multi-disciplinary domestic abuse training programmes offered by the Domestic Abuse Partnership and the Safeguarding Children Board. A programme of training to individual teams and services by the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Co-ordinator has been implemented and is ongoing.

Funding has been made available to review and refresh the Safe and Sound education package for schools and youth services. A successful event to launch the pack was held in March 2011.

A review looking at the options in respect of extending and re-commissioning the Freedom Project has been undertaken. This programme works with women who have suffered domestic abuse. By autumn 2011 responsibility for the co-ordination of the Freedom programme will sit within the Parenting Team. In conjunction with the Domestic Abuse Co-coordinator, work is being undertaken to identify areas of high need to ensure that future delivery is targeted along with a focus on delivery in refuges. Awareness and facilitation training around Freedom will also be undertaken. Preliminary work to explore the possibilities of co-locating key practitioners to more effectively respond to domestic abuse referrals has also begun.

The priority to **reduce the incidence and impact of bullying on children and young people** is being progressed through the developing framework of local delivery. The resource pack for schools and the Train the Trainer programme have been delivered to support sustainability and development of anti-bullying strategies in schools is ongoing. Members of the Youth Parliament have also been active in leading on an Anti-Bullying campaign.

Work on the cross cutting priority to improve **prevention, early identification and intervention** continues and the implementation of the CAF procedures have been overhauled leading to streamlined processes, making it easier for professionals to access early interventions. The Parenting Team has continued to offer early interventions and is working hard to embed Think Family, with a particular emphasis on Adult Services and much closer working relationship with drug, alcohol and mental health services. Early intervention has continued to be delivered through Children's Centres and work continues through early years settings to ensure that early interventions are made as soon as possible. The offer of new free places for 57 deprived two year olds has supported this group locally to access services more quickly.

The Care Matters Action Plan has been implemented and provided a good framework to ensure corporate parenting responsibilities are met.

The Regional Improvement and Efficiency partnership (RIEP) safeguarding programme (ESP) is being implemented and continues to support the implementation of the Newly Qualified Social Worker programme.

Enjoy and Achieve

What were our priorities in year 2

9. Transform teaching and learning and raise achievement for all learners particularly underachieving groups and children in vulnerable circumstances.
10. Improve engagement and enjoyment for all children and young people.

What difference have we made?

- Continued to develop the skills of the workforce through the training schools network;
- Improved the capacity of schools to support themselves and each other;
- Carried out a review of provision in Dunstable & Houghton Regis as part of the commitment to implementing the Education Vision to transform learning;
- Improved targeted early intervention and identification programmes for vulnerable groups through one to one tuition;
- Worked with schools to improve inclusion, early identification of, and early intervention with, children at risk of exclusion and re-commissioned PRU provision;
- Provided professional challenge to schools to carry out robust self evaluation to support improvement and ensure a close correlation between Ofsted judgements and Self Evaluation Forms;
- Increased the proportion of inspections judged to be outstanding;
- Improved the percentage of pupils achieving 5A*-C including English and Mathematics.

Progress on the priorities

Good progress is being made on delivering the following priorities:

- Transforming teaching and learning and strengthening leadership to ensure that every school and early years' setting is at least good. During the year 11 schools have been judged to be outstanding, bringing the total number of Outstanding inspections to 63 - an increase of seven from last year.
- Improving progress between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Implementing the Improving Schools Programme at Key Stage 2. Middle schools involved improved their outcomes, with the overall average percentage of pupils attaining Level 4+ in English and Mathematics increasing from 64% to 67%.
- Improving the attainment of vulnerable groups. Most pupils at risk of not achieving level 4+ who received 1-1 Tuition achieved Level 4+ in English and/or Mathematics.
- Raising standards at Key Stage 4; 54.2% of students at Key Stage 4 achieved 5A*-C including English and mathematics. This represents an improvement of 4% compared with 2009. These figures place Central Bedfordshire above the national average and improving faster than the national rate of improvement.
- Improving the climate for learning in schools and improving the emotional health and well-being of young people through the SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) programme.
- Reducing the number of permanent and fixed-term exclusions.

- Reducing the number of schools with high levels of persistent absence.
- Reviewing support for excluded children and those at risk of exclusion through re-commissioning PRU provision.

Challenges remain in the following areas:

- Raising attainment at Key Stage 2. 2010 results were static with 73% of pupils achieving level 2 in English and mathematics.
- Closing the 4.4% gap between Central Bedfordshire and its statistical neighbours for performance at Key Stage 4.
- Improving A level performance.

Make a positive contribution

What were our priorities in year 2?

11. Develop and promote children and young people's positive contribution to communities across Central Bedfordshire and increase opportunities for them to play an active part in influencing the decisions that affect their lives and well-being.
12. Reduce youth offending and anti-social behaviour.
13. Promote and provide activities and information for all children and young people and their families, ensuring that the hard to reach and those with disabilities can take part in mainstream activity.

What difference have we made?

- Young inspectors have been involved in 18 inspections and most recommendations have been implemented - key areas inspected and improved include Plan B, Leighton Buzzard Youth Centre, Sandy and Biggleswade Youth Centre, the Countryside Access service that looks after Stock Grove Park and Dunstable Downs and the TACTIC Centre in Leighton Buzzard.
- 64 young people have been elected to the first Central Bedfordshire Youth Parliament – 134 candidates took part and 12,025 young people voted.
- The Youth Parliament has led on a number of campaigns including: Gun and Knife Crime, Anti Bullying campaign, Things to do campaign, Save Youth Support Services.
- Over 100 young people were involved in Local Democracy Week events and events were held in three special schools.
- Over 4,000 children and young people were involved in setting priorities for the revised Children and Young People's Plan.

Progress on the priorities

The priority to **develop and promote children and young people's positive contribution to communities** is progressing well and the Youth Parliament is now in place and has been actively involved in a number of local campaigns, including a campaign and petition to support youth services. The members of the Youth Parliament have also been actively involved in responding to consultations from the following organisations- Greensands Trust, Police Authority, Bedfordshire Link, MY Journey, Central Bedfordshire Council's Budget and the Children's and Young Peoples plan.

In addition the Youth MPs regularly attend Children's Trust Board meetings and have attended Link Health Board meetings. A number of events have also taken place which encourage positive contribution and these include a successful gun and knife crime event in Dunstable, a Party in the Park at Leighton Linlade and Friday evening and weekend activities at the Sandy Youth Café. **The Family and Youth Information Service** is now live and information on activities is available to children, young people and their families.

Performance on the priority to **reduce youth offending and anti-social behaviour** has shown a mixed picture. Data shows that targets for the number of young people receiving custodial sentences and re-offending rates are both on track. However the number of First Time Entrants has been variable. Although Central Bedfordshire will show an overall reduction of 38.55 %, the rate in Quarter 4 shows a rise in numbers. This may be a result of the lower baseline in the corresponding quarter of 2009/10, set by the introduction of restorative disposals.

Achieve economic well-being

What were our priorities in year 2?

14. Develop a locality approach in reducing the number young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) and targeting those areas with the highest NEET levels.
15. Work with employers, colleges and schools to increase the range and quality of local training, volunteering and job opportunities.
16. Inspire our most vulnerable young people to raise their aspirations and provide integrated support particularly to care leavers, young offenders, young carers, young people with physical and learning disabilities, gypsy and traveller children and teenage parents.

What difference have we made?

- Reduced the level of young people not in education, employment or training at a time of recession and high youth unemployment through focused joint working in localities.
- Developed the new Apprenticeship Programmes.
- Apprenticeship take up against last year's performance shows significant growth of 27%.
- Success rates for Apprenticeships completing is in line with national rates at 73%.
- Delivered a strong programme of enterprise support across the area.
- Developing a targeted offer of work related learning with the Education Business Partnership – built on demand from learners/schools.
- Introduced the Future Jobs Fund and supported this with a Work and Skills Plan to address the progression routes, target interventions and reduce family worklessness.
- Specific promotion and capital support to assist schools introducing the new Diploma.

Progress on the priorities

Overall the joint work in raising levels of economic well being for young people has been challenging this year and has resulted in mixed results against the priorities. The impact of the recession during the year has had an impact on the opportunities open to young people to progress into employment. The 18-24 age group witnessed an increase of 650 people claiming Job Seekers Allowance from March 2008 to March 2010. This is a 119% increase. Between March 2010 and March 2011, the number fell by 60. Although this is a move in the right direction, unemployment amongst young people remains disproportionately high; in March 2011, the claimant count for all ages was 2.5%. For those aged between 18 and 24, the rate was 5.9%. In turn this increased the difficulty in many programmes to access appropriate work placements and the need to re-profile the outcome for a number of key contracts issued to our partners who deliver. The impact has also driven considerable pressure onto colleges and other post-16 providers as young people choose not to leave education at a time when resources are not immediately increased and lag the demand.

The **priority has been to reduce NEET** from 6.1% in 2007/8, to 5.8% in 2008/9, 5.6% by 2009/10 and then to 5% for 2010/11. This target has been achieved. Since October 2010 the local NEET percentage has been falling and in March 2011, the Central Bedfordshire NEET (adjusted) percentage for 16-18 year olds was 4.1% (240

individuals). This is currently lower than the Regional and National averages. The local percentage for those 'In Learning' is higher than the Regional and National averages at 87.6%. The fourth quarter results are expanded in the table below:

NEET	16 year olds	17 year olds	18 year olds	16-18 year olds
January	3.4%	4.0%	5.6%	4.5%
February	3.4%	4.0%	5.5%	4.5%
March	2.9%	3.8%	5.2%	4.1%

The last round of the European Social Fund (ESF) supported a number of projects aimed at NEET and pre-NEETS (with 326 participants by February 2011), and the Prospectus for the latest ESF round has £335,000 available for 14-18 year old young people (NEETs) in Central Bedfordshire. Funding from the Economic Participation programme complemented Integrated Youth Support Services funding to support four training schemes with a focus on encouraging and supporting young people into apprenticeships, further training or employment. Thirty seven young people are being supported through these schemes.

A key issue for this work looking forward is the introduction of the raising of the compulsory leaving age to 18 (phased for 17 year olds in 2013 and for 18 year olds in 2015) and the development of the vocational curriculum for the 14-19 cohort.

The **priority to work with employers, colleges and schools to increase the range and quality of local training, volunteering and job opportunities** has seen a significant amount of activity, although no clear target has been set. The overall rating against the individual activities is good with a number of positive outcomes from the additional provision provided through enterprise, apprenticeships, work experience, Future Job Fund opportunities, information, advice and guidance, additional learning opportunities and workforce development with school staff.

The 14-19 Commissioning Team have recently tendered for activity in 2011/12, including specific support for young people who are NEET.

The broad priority to **inspire and raise aspirations of the most vulnerable people** has not made the progress anticipated and greater clarity is required about the integrated programmes needed in key areas such as Special Education Needs, young carers and increasing levels of teenage parents, in order to deliver outcomes. However 100% of statemented students from year 9 have a quality transition plan in place. A Learning for Living and Work Strategy has been implemented for Learners with Learning Difficulties and /or Disabilities (LLDD). Further joint working between youth services and services leading on looked after children and young people has been undertaken to support the targeting of activity for vulnerable young people, particularly those in the NEET group. In future this work will be developed further through the Child Poverty Strategy as there is a priority to 'develop a culture for learning based on high aspirations for all'.

The cross cutting priority to **reduce Child Poverty** is making good progress and we are on time to deliver against key milestones. A Child Poverty Family Intervention Project (FIP) has been continuing and in recognition of the importance of skills and employment in moving families out of poverty, the FIP team were awarded funding from the Economic Participation programme. This funded the secondment of an outreach worker from Bedfordshire Adult Skills and Community Learning to work

alongside Key Workers to offer advice and support around skills and employability. In the light of the legislative duties outlined in the Child Poverty Act 2010, a Child Poverty Strategy for Central Bedfordshire has been developed and approved. A draft Child Poverty Needs Assessment has also been produced.

Work is underway on the development of an All Age Skills Strategy for Central Bedfordshire, which will identify the skills priorities for the area and will address how these priorities will be met. Workshops to discuss the Strategy have already taken place and further workshops are scheduled to occur in June and July. A number of focus groups are also to be held, including sessions with students in years 10 and 11, and 12, sessions with NEET and post-NEETs and a session with businesses to discuss apprenticeships. Also being explored are focus groups with those who traditionally under-perform, for example young people in or leaving care, and gypsy and travellers.

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Central Bedfordshire Children and Young People's Plan (2011-2014)



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Welcome to the Children and Young People’s Plan for Central Bedfordshire

This plan sets out our shared vision for children, young people and their families in Central Bedfordshire and it shows how we plan to achieve it. We know that most children and young people in Central Bedfordshire enjoy their childhood and go on to be confident and successful young adults – we want to make sure that we maintain this and improve the achievements and outcomes for those children and young people who are not doing as well.

We have set out in this plan those things we think are important to focus on over the next three years. It is not a detailed account of all we plan to do but it does set out those things we want to work on together and which we think are critical to achieving our vision. There are more detailed strategies and plans which support the priorities set out in this plan.

We look forward to working with children, young people, their families and those involved in delivering services for them

We would like to thank all those that have been involved in the development of the plan. In particular we want to thank the 4,275 young people who told us what they think is important. Their ideas and priorities have helped to shape this plan. We look forward to working with children, young people, their families and those involved in delivering services for them, to tackle our challenges and celebrate our successes.

Aspley Guise Lower School

Greys Educational Centre – Pupil Referral Unit

Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue

Lawns Early Excellence and Children’s Centre

Bedfordshire Police

NHS Bedfordshire

Bedfordshire Probation

NHS East of England

Catholic Diocese of Northampton

Voluntary Organisations for children, young people and families (VOCypf)

Central Bedfordshire College

Youth Offending Service

Central Bedfordshire Council

Youth Parliament

Central Bedfordshire Local Safeguarding Board

Diocese of St Albans

**The Central Bedfordshire Children and Young People Trust Board
On behalf of the Central Bedfordshire Children and Young People’s Trust**

Introduction

Since the Central Bedfordshire Children's Trust was set up in April 2009, and since the first Children and Young People's plan was agreed in September 2009, there have been changes at the international, national and local level. The world has experienced a major financial crisis, in the UK a new Government is in place with new priorities and in Central Bedfordshire everyone is working to find ways to deliver important services to young people and their families with less money.

A key legal and policy change brought in by the new Coalition Government means that there is no longer a legal requirement to produce a Children and Young People's Plan. The government has also stated that it intends to revoke the duty to establish Children's Trusts. The partners in Central Bedfordshire have discussed these changes and have agreed that it is important to

continue to work together. The partnership is therefore continuing to meet and have agreed this as their second plan. Ofsted notes in their assessment in 2010 that 'good progress has been made in establishing strategic partnerships and identifying the right priorities to improve outcomes for all children, young people and their families'.

Our vision for Children and Young People in Central Beds

Our vision for children and young people growing up in Central Bedfordshire remains the same. We want every child in Central Bedfordshire to enjoy their childhood and have the best possible start in life. We want every child to do well at school, make friends and build strong relationships with their family. By the age of 19, as young adults, we want every young person to have the knowledge, skills and qualifications that will give them the best chance of success, so that they are prepared to take their full place in society as a happy, healthy, contributing and confident citizen.



Living in Central Bedfordshire

Central Bedfordshire is home to approximately 252,900 people. Around 130,200 (51.5% of the population) people live in the larger towns with 37,000 in Leighton Linlade, 35,120 in Dunstable, 16,670 in Houghton Regis, 16,420 in Biggleswade, 13,370 in Flitwick and 11,620 in Sandy (figures based on Bedfordshire population model forecasts for 2009).

Around 62,000 children and young people between the ages of 0-19 live in Central Bedfordshire and by 2021 it is forecast that there will be about 2,000 more children aged under 16. The number of births in Central Bedfordshire has been around 3,000 for the last three years but has shown an increase between 2003 and 2008 in line with the national trend.

Age range of children and young people population in Central Bedfordshire, 2009	
0 – 4	15,800
5 – 9	15,200
10 – 14	15,600
15 - 19	15,500
*ONS – estimates June 2009	

Central Bedfordshire is generally an affluent area and many children and young people in the area enjoy a very good quality of life and have good prospects in relation to both their own future happiness and their contribution to their communities. National performance measures show almost all outcomes are in line with or above the averages for England or similar areas (Annual children’s services assessment 2010).

The health of our children and young people compares well with the East of England, and England as a whole. Improvements have been made to the provision of mental health services and more young people report that they have good relationships with friends and family than found nationally. The emotional and behavioural health of children in care is good. More children say they enjoy access to parks and play areas than found elsewhere. Levels of obesity among 5 and 11 year olds are low; however local data show that obesity rates are rising for the older group. The number of young women under the age of 18 who become pregnant is falling at a faster rate than nationally, although there are six wards in Central Bedfordshire where rates are significantly higher than the National average and locally agreed targets for the last year were not met. Fewer 16 year olds reported that they had recently been drunk or taken drugs in 2010 than in 2009 (Annual children’s services assessment 2010).

Arrangements for keeping children and young people safe are almost always good and Ofsted inspections of childminders, schools, colleges and children’s homes confirm this. The unannounced inspection of frontline child protection services in May 2010 identified a number of strengths in the arrangements for supporting families whose circumstances make them more vulnerable. Fewer young people report feeling bullied than elsewhere. The youth offending service performs well against the national indicators relating to first time offenders and re-offending rates.

Almost all child carers and nursery, primary and special schools are good at helping children and young people to do well and enjoy learning. However our upper schools and colleges are not as good with about a third judged to be only adequate. Examination results for 16 year olds are similar to the national picture but again they are not as good as similar areas with far fewer obtaining two or more high grades in science than elsewhere.

Those from low income families make good progress in upper schools and by the age of 16 the gap between achievement and their peers is not as wide as elsewhere. However young people with special educational needs do not do as well in upper schools as similar groups nationally. Behaviour is usually good in upper schools and the number of pupils who are often absent from school is well below the national average.

Most young people receive good support in schools and colleges to gain the skills and qualifications needed for future jobs. The number achieving good qualifications at 19 years of age is in line with national figures although below similar areas, which means that not all young people of this age are doing as well as they could be. Not as many 19 year olds from low-income families in Central Bedfordshire gain the higher level 3 qualifications as those from similar areas, however there is good progress in the number gaining level 2 qualifications (Annual children's services assessment 2010).

Although it is clear that most children and young people in Central Bedfordshire do well, we know that there is a significant minority of children and young people for whom outcomes are much worse than those of the rest.

In terms of overall deprivation, in 2007 none of the areas in Central Bedfordshire were in the top 20% most deprived in England. However, for some individual aspects of deprivation (such as education, crime and income) communities in Dunstable, Houghton Regis and Sandy do fall into the worst 10% nationally.

Central Bedfordshire has 12.1% of its children living in poverty. This statistic is based on the most up to date figures available from Her Majesty's Customs and Revenue (HMRC) and relates to the year 2008-2009. This figure masks some high levels of poverty within particular areas and the five areas with the highest levels of poverty are:

- Tithe Farm 31.4%
- Parkside 27.1%
- Manshead 25.6%
- Northfields 24.8%
- Houghton Hall 22.9%

There are smaller local areas which for statistical purposes are called local super output areas (LSOA). Those with the highest IDACI score (Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index) are in the wards of Manshead, Tithe Farm, Houghton Hall, and Parkside and these are in the highest 10% of LSOAs in the East England and within the worst 20% in England.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is a basket of indicators including employment levels, health and disability, education skills and training, housing issues, crime and disorder and the living environment. The most recent IMD shows that the highest levels of deprivation based on these indicators are in Parkside, Manshead, Tithe Farm, and Northfields.



Whilst there is clearly a concentration of poverty and deprivation across the areas within Dunstable and Houghton Regis there is however no ward in Central Bedfordshire which does not have some child poverty and levels of deprivation. The isolating effect of being a child in poverty in an area of relative affluence should not be underestimated. Furthermore areas within Flitwick, Sandy and Leighton Buzzard also have pockets of deprivation and poverty.

Headteachers in Central Bedfordshire tell us that

“There is a clear impact on the emotional development of children who are living in a “stressful” environment e.g. a household with debt problems”

“Education is often a low priority at home for households in poverty”

“It can be very isolating to be poor in an area of relative affluence.”

“Some children will not be accessing the full curriculum e.g, school trips, cost of transport to swimming pools, because parents cannot afford this and do not wish to draw attention to this, so children are kept off school “

“Poor children will often have lower self-esteem”

“Some children will be unable to participate in after school activities”

“Some poor children will have poor attendance due to health problems “

Asking people what they thought was important

4,275 children and young people told us that they thought the priorities in this Children and Young People's Plan were important. The consultation was done by:

- Consulting with young people through our existing contacts, for example with children in care, youth clubs and the Youth Parliament;
- Running workshops with children and young people taking part in events such as Anti-bullying week, Black History Month and Local Democracy Week;
- Running an e-consultation for parents, stakeholders and children.

51% of children and young people who completed the questionnaire were girls and 49% were boys. 8% of those completing the questionnaire said they had either a statement of Special Educational Needs or a form of disability. The majority who completed the questionnaire described themselves as White (85%) with 3% indicating they had a Mixed background, 2% were Black or Black British, 2% were Asian or Asian British and 8% described themselves as 'other'.

The 86 adults who filled in the questionnaire on the website also told us that they thought the priorities in the plan were important. 71% identified themselves as parents or carers, 13% represented a group or an organisation, 6% were childminders or a childcare provider and 10% chose the 'other' category to describe themselves.

What children, young people and adults said about the priorities

Helping children and young people achieve more and transforming our relationship with schools - 95 % of children and young people consulted felt that this priority was important or very important. 95% of adults felt that this priority was important or very important.

"I think that children should be helped in school to be ready for the big wide world"

"Some people learn better from doing, not hearing about it"

"Yes because being educated properly will help after school to get a proper job"



“Why do we have to wear our tie with seven stripes!?”

“We are nagged at for small reasons – not actually our education, what we do outside of school and our uniform for example, seems more important, when it’s not”

Protecting children and keeping them safe -
98% of children and young people consulted felt that this priority was important or very important. 99% of adults felt that this priority was important or very important.

“Can you make sure that our area is safe and sound and we are all kind”

“It is important that children should be able to be safe with mum and dad”

“I think it is important to keep children from harm because if anyone has anything worrying them it is harder to concentrate at school and get a good education”

“It is very important to stop anti-social behaviour”

“Help people with bad behaviour”

Reducing child poverty and the effects for those living in poverty and improving early intervention and prevention – 96% of children and young people consulted felt that this priority was important or very important. 95% of adults felt that this priority was important or very important.

“Some of the children need more help with what happens with them at home”

“There is a clear impact on the emotional development of children who are living in a stressful environment e.g. a household with debt problems”

“Priority must be early intervention in any problem, whether it’s poverty, parenting, emotional problem. Problems are cheaper to solve when little, as well as easier to solve.”

“Support for parents is of great importance - children need stable, loving and supportive parents to help them achieve their full potential. Parents will need support as much as children when a family is going through difficult times.”

Targeting the most deprived areas and vulnerable groups to improve children’s emotional and physical health – 97% of children and young people consulted felt that this priority was important or very important. 86% of adults felt that this priority was important or very important.

“Most of the ‘very importants’ that I have ticked are to stop children my age getting depressed”

“You need to keep children sporty and active”

“If you have a disability and don’t get help, what do you do?” (typed for a child with SEN/a disability)

“I think emotional health is the most important because that affects school life as well”

“If a child is upset at home then they should be able to talk about it”

“I think number 5 is important because parents struggle with children with disabilities”

“Why is fitness and health so important? Isn’t it for the person to decide?”

A final quote from a young person:

“are these questions going to be counted up and make a difference to the world?”

We will be developing a children and young people’s summary version of the plan in electronic format for practitioners to draw down and use when working with children and young people. This version of the plan will allow children and young people to easily see what we plan to do and how we have listened to what they told us.



Our priorities

Priority 1: Helping children and young people achieve more and transforming our relationship with schools

What we know

- Outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage have remained static over the last three years (less than 1% improvement overall) whilst outcomes nationally and for similar authorities have improved rapidly (5-7%).
- Key Stage 1 performance is better than the national average and similar areas.
- At Key Stage 2 performance has remained static whilst national performance has improved by 2% and similar areas have improved by 1% - 73% of pupils attained level 4 in English and Mathematics which is 1% below the national average and 3% below similar areas.
- At Key Stage 4 performance has improved: students achieving five or more GCSE grades at A*-C including English and Mathematics rose from 50% in 2009 to 54% in 2010. This is above the national average (53.1%) but as this rise in performance was matched by similar areas Central Bedfordshire is ranked bottom (11th out of 11) compared to statistical neighbours.
- The proportion of students achieving five or more GCSE grades at A*-C is similar –performance has improved from 67% in 2009 to 75% in 2010.
- A-level performance in Central Bedfordshire is about average and students complete a reasonable number of subjects to enter University or other progression routes, however the percentage achieving A*-B grades appears to be lower than the national figure.

- There are inequality gaps in achievement for Looked After Children, Gypsy/Roma and travellers of Irish Heritage, those pupils eligible for free school meals, those from a Black Caribbean background and those with statements of Special Educational Needs.
- Rate of exclusions from schools are high compared to similar areas and the national average and local targets are not being met.
- Take up of apprenticeships lags by almost 50% compared to other parts of the East of England.

What we are going to do

Objective 1: Transform teaching and learning and raise achievement for all learners including underachieving groups and children in vulnerable circumstances

Actions

- Continue with the area review for each of the four geographical areas to work out how school organisation in each area can best meet the aspirations and review the number of transition points and reduce these where possible.
- Schools will develop strong, governed partnerships which have the core purpose of improving outcomes and raising achievement by providing a well planned, continuous curriculum and high quality learning experiences for young people from the age of 0 to 19.
- Promoting collaborative learning communities, inclusion, sharing of good practice and innovation.

- Federations, trusts and partnerships to develop locally delivered targeted services to support prevention, early identification and effective interventions that support inclusion. This will include commissioned outreach from special schools and schools and settings with identified good practice.
- Work with those schools that are not achieving standards to raise achievement.
- Ensure provision to raise the participation age.
- Ensure more children make the expected two levels of progress by the age of 11.
- Improve upper schools and post -16 provision so that more are good or better.
- Increase the number of young people from low income families who gain qualifications at the age of 19.

What success looks like

- % of children achieving at least 78 points across all six areas of learning at Early Years Foundation Stage.
- % of young people achieving 2 levels of progress Key Stage 1-2 in English and in Maths.
- Pupils make good progress between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4.
- % achieving five or more A-C grades at GCSE or equivalent, including English and Maths.
- % of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in English and Maths at Key Stage 2.
- % of pupils achieving A-C including English and Maths at GCSE.
- Reduction in the rate of permanent exclusions from school.

Objective 2: Develop and promote children and young people's positive contribution to all communities across Central Bedfordshire so that they are able to influence the decisions that affect their lives and wellbeing

Actions

- Create a wide range of easily accessible opportunities for young people to engage in volunteering and help develop the 'Big Society' for the future.
- Support the voluntary sector in securing bids to provide a range of positive activities for children and young people.
- Provide accessible information, advice and guidance for children, young people and their families.
- Increase the awareness of professionals working on the range of services available and how young people can access these when they need them.
- Work through Children's Centres with priority families to strengthen and improve relationships by encouraging positive parenting.



What success looks like

- Wide range and take up of volunteering opportunities.
- Youth Parliament is active and participating in Children's Trust Board meetings.
- Young people engaged in shaping service development.

Supporting plans

- Education Vision for Central Bedfordshire
- Capital Programme for Schools
- Parenting Strategy
- Workforce Development Strategy
- Public Health Improvement Plans
- Bedfordshire Teenage Pregnancy Strategy

Cross cutting priority: Develop an integrated workforce which is ambitious for all children and their families and expert in its practice

- To understand the current and future workforce needs relating to sectors supporting this priority.
- To ensure information, learning and advice to all providers of early years education is easily accessible by continuing to develop the Central Bedfordshire Learning and Development Centre and its accredited learning offer.
- Ensure that the voluntary sector is contract ready and has the skills and capacity to respond to commissions.



Priority 2: Protecting children and keeping them safe

What we know

- 82% of children and young people report that they feel very safe or quite safe where they live; this compares to 81% nationally and 83% in similar areas.
- Arrangements for keeping children and young people safe are almost always good.
- Performance in protecting vulnerable children and young people is good. Key indicators measuring assessment, stability and review are on target.
- The unannounced inspection of front line child protection services in May 2010 identified a number of strengths in the arrangements for supporting families whose circumstances make them more vulnerable. Families are fully involved in assessments and action plans to support them.
- Child protection processes for disabled children are strong.
- Between April 2009 and February 2010 of 5024 contacts in Central Bedfordshire Specialist Services, 1785 were recorded as being on account of domestic violence. Between April 2009 and February 2010 of 1701 referrals, 1429 were recorded as due to child care concerns. It is anticipated that domestic abuse would feature in a significant proportion of these referrals.

What we are going to do

Objective 3: Protect children and young people from harm by providing a co-ordinated and effective safeguarding process.

Actions

- Partners to continue working closely to develop the processes for identifying and responding to children whose safety is, or is likely to be, compromised.
- Continue to develop the Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Board.

What success looks like

- The Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board continues to function effectively.
- Children and young people report feeling safer and know how to access help from a trusted source should it be needed.
- Inspections of services result in positive judgements about the effectiveness of those services.
- Reduction in the percentage of referrals of children in need that led to initial assessments
- % of initial assessments within seven working days of referral.
- % of children looked after at 31 March with three or more placements during the year.
- Ensure that 100% of child protection cases which should have been reviewed during the year were reviewed.
- % of referrals of children in need that led to initial assessments.



Objective 4: Reduce the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people.

Actions

- Develop and commission an appropriate range of services to respond to and reduce the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people.
- Work with partners to increase the reporting of domestic abuse so that we can fully understand the scale of the issue and increase awareness in support services in the Community.
- Work with partners to increase the number of repeat incidents being referred to the MARAC (Multi-agency risk assessment conference).
- Increase in appropriate cases going through the MARAC and increase support for vulnerable victims going through MARAC.

What success looks like

- Clear identification of children and young people in situations of domestic abuse receiving an appropriate, timely and effective response.
- Children and young people report that they feel safer.

Objective 5: Reduce youth offending and anti-social behaviour

Actions

- Reduce first time entrants into the Youth Justice System by continuing to work in partnership with Bedfordshire Police to develop restorative approaches. Youth Offending teams are involved in assessments and offer time limited intervention, including work with parents/carers and families, coupled with signposting to other agencies as necessary.
- Reduce re-offending rates amongst young people by continuing to offer a range of individual and group based interventions.
- Maintain the reduction in the high level of custodial sentences by continuing to provide robust alternatives to the Court.

What success looks like

- Reduction in first time entrants is achieved by ensuring that all young people who come to the attention of the police are appropriately assessed and, where possible, a restorative intervention is applied.
- Reduction in re-offending rates amongst young people is achieved by providing robust and targeted interventions, matched to the assessed level of risk and vulnerability. Partners are involved in managing risk and vulnerability and providing support to ensure education, training, and employment is available.
- Similar or lower level of custodial sentences compared to 2009/10.

Cross cutting priority: Develop an integrated workforce which is ambitious for all children and their families and expert in its practice

- To understand the current and future workforce needs relating to sectors supporting this priority.
- All members of the children's workforce know how to keep children and young people safe and the children's workforce is configured and trained to co-operate in a consistent, responsive and effective manner.
- Advice, information and training on safeguarding children and young people is accessible and members of the workforce know how to access this.
- Learning to support integrated assessment processes is available.
- Safer recruitment training is available and accessible to organisations.
- Build the skill base of staff that have a central role in assessing, supervising or making key decisions in specialist safeguarding work, in particular in sexual abuse cases.
- Delivering Step up to Social Work and Entry into Social Work Programmes.
- Developing and delivering the Newly Qualified Social Worker programme.
- Learning and development programmes for staff in specialist services.
- Developing and delivering a recruitment and retention strategy, including a Return to Social Work programme.
- Integrate research and best practice into multi-disciplinary training programmes so that the workforce is equipped to identify and respond to children exposed to domestic abuse.
- Implement recommendations of the Social Work Reform Board.

Supporting plans

- Community Safety Partnership Plan
- Community Safety Partnership Domestic Abuse Plan
- Workforce Development Strategy
- Public Health Improvement Plans



Priority 3: Reducing child poverty and the effects for those living in poverty and improving early intervention and prevention

What we know

- Children from poorer backgrounds do less well and are more likely to die from an accident in childhood, have low educational achievement, turn to crime, be poor as an adult and raise their own children in poverty.
- 27% of children in Central Bedfordshire live in low income families. In parts of Houghton Regis and Dunstable between 45% and 50% of children live in low income households.
- 12% of children in Central Bedfordshire live in workless families. In parts of Houghton Regis and Dunstable between 23% and 31% live in workless families.
- The highest levels of babies born into a smoking household are in Dunstable, Parkside in Houghton Regis, Flitwick and parts of Sandy. The lowest levels of breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks are in Manshead, Tithe Farm, Houghton Hall, Parkside and parts of Dunstable.
- Nationally 4.9% of 5 – 10 year olds have conduct disorders, and a comparable estimation for Central Bedfordshire would equate to 910 children. This would suggest high levels of need for parenting programmes known to be effective in addressing conduct disorders.
- Houghton Hall (79.9), Manshead (78.2) Tithe Farm (74), Parkside (66.7), Stanbridge (60.8) and Dunstable Central (52) have much higher rates of teenage conception than the national average of 40.5 per 1,000 females aged 15-17 and the regional average of 31.6 per 1,000. These fall into the 20% highest under 18 conception ward rates in the UK.
- The inequality gap at age 19 for achievement at either level 2 (GCSE or equivalent) or level 3 (A level or equivalent) places Central Bedfordshire in the bottom quartile.
- Low levels of young people going on to higher education in Tithe Farm (7.9%), Parkside (10.5%), Biggleswade Stratton (11.7%) and Sandy Pinnacle (12.8%) compared to England (24.3%). Northfields, Dunstable Central, Manshead, Planets and Houghton Hall also fall below the England average.
- At the end of 2009 around 6% of 16 to 18 year olds are not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- At the end of 2009 around 68% of care leavers were in employment, education or training and the target was not met although this performance exceeds that of national and statistical comparators.
- Manshead, Parkside and Northfields have the highest rate of unemployment in Central Bedfordshire.
- Tithe Farm, Parkside, Plantation and Sandy Pinnacle have the lowest level of educational and skills attainment.
- Parkside, Dunstable Central, Northfields and Tithe Farm have high levels of crime.

Objective 6: Maximise opportunities for families in poverty to access employment which will have the outcome of more families working and thus reducing levels of family and child poverty

Actions

- Development of the 'economic powerhouse' and implementation of the vision and strategy to attract investment and deliver strong employment growth
- Improve education outcomes across all ages (see priority 1).
- Work with employers, colleges and schools to increase the range and quality of local training, volunteering and job opportunities which will help improve the employment prospects for those not in employment and that is appropriate to the area of jobs growth.
- Ensure high quality childcare is available so that parents begin to access training courses and working opportunities, both part and full-time.
- Through outreach, target families in or at greater risk of poverty to encourage them to find appropriate childcare and take up appropriate payment assistance and tax credits to assist with childcare costs, making it worthwhile for parents to train and work.

What success looks like

- 1,800 new jobs every year for the next 15 years.
- A reduction in the proportion of children who live in relative low income to less than 10%.
- Providing increased training and work experiences for 14-16 year olds and developing apprenticeship opportunities.



Objective 7: Ensure families in poverty are accessing all available financial assistance so that non-working families move from worklessness into work in the meantime accessing appropriate benefits

Actions

- Promote the take-up of free school meals to alleviate pressure on family budgets which will also offer additional financial assistance to the school who can then work further with families living in poverty.
- Provide easily accessible high quality welfare advice and information services.

What success looks like

- Increased take up of free school meals.
- Easily accessible, high quality welfare advice and information services.

Objective 8: To improve life chances of children and families by intervening early to prevent poor outcomes and raising educational achievements and aspirations with the outcome that children from poor households gain better qualifications to ensure their access to the labour market so that the cycle of intergenerational poverty is broken

Actions

- Increase the employability and career potential of young people at greatest risk of not progressing into work.
- Endorse the importance of healthy lifestyles.
- Ensure high quality early years intervention and prevention services are in place through Children’s Centres working with the parents of the very young on healthy diets, longer breastfeeding, sexual health, drugs and alcohol and stop smoking initiatives.
- Continue to offer limited provision of free places in care and education for two year olds with high levels of need.
- Ensure increased take up of free places in high quality provision for three and four year olds.
- Support parents and families through the parenting and family support strategy with clear pathways through to targeted parenting and family support where additional needs are identified.



- To ensure provision for specific groups of families and those 'experiencing particular challenges' or needs and to provide enhanced multi agency support for families at risk (2%) and those where children and young people have been identified as at risk of entering the care system.
- Develop a culture of learning based on high aspirations for all.
- Provide multi agency support to vulnerable families such as teenage parents where children have a 60% increased chance of being brought up in poverty.
- Raise awareness of sexually transmitted infections, including conception within a variety of settings i.e. schools, colleges and community settings.
- Promote a multi-agency approach to improve access to sexual health, Chlamydia screening and drug and alcohol services through training of professionals working with children and young people.
- Improve early access to psychological therapies for a range of difficulties, including eating disorders and self harm.

What success looks like

- % of parents reporting that the service helped them with their problems/needs.
- Reduction in the achievement gap between children eligible for Free School Meals and their peers.
- Improved attendance rates at school and a reduced exclusion rates.
- Reduction in the percentage of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- Reduction in sexually transmitted infections.
- Reduction in the under 18 conception rate.



Objective 9: Work with colleagues from all sectors and agencies to improve the environmental factors which exacerbate the effects of poverty and harness the resources of the third sector and services across the Council so that poor families develop healthier lifestyles to prolong life expectancy and live in an improved environment

Actions

- Reduce the number and rate of teenage pregnancies by ensuring key engagement of all organisations that can have an impact on reduction: health, education, youth services and the voluntary sector to target work on vulnerable groups of young people.
- Embed the ‘think family’ approach within all homelessness prevention activity and broader interventions to sustain families in permanent settled accommodation.
- Promote a multi-agency approach to improved ante, peri and post natal care along with improved levels of breastfeeding support and information on healthy eating.
- Work together to reduce the levels of crime and its impact on families in deprived areas.
- Support teenage parents through increasing their access to services to improve outcomes for them and their children to break the cycle of social deprivation and poverty.

What success looks like

- Reduction in the under 18 conception rate.
- Reduction in crime in deprived areas (through the Community Safety Partnership).

Cross cutting priority: Develop an integrated workforce which is ambitious for all children and their families and expert in its practice

- To understand the current and future workforce needs relating to sectors supporting this priority.
- To provide information, training and advice to all providers of early years education and deliver effective recruitment and retention strategies.
- Support the development of apprenticeships.
- Deliver inter-agency ‘think family’ awareness training to embed this approach to working.
- Deliver inter-agency Common Assessment Framework Training.
- Training for front line staff on understanding the benefits system.

Supporting plans

- Sustainable Community Strategy
- Child Poverty Strategy
- Economic Development Strategy
- Community Safety Strategy
- Skills Strategy
- Workforce Development Strategy
- NHS Bedfordshire: A Healthier Bedfordshire Strategy
- Bedfordshire Teenage Pregnancy Strategy
- NHS Bedfordshire’s Sexual Health Strategy
- Public Health Improvement Plans

Priority 4: Targeting the most deprived areas and vulnerable groups to improve children's emotional and physical health

What we know

- Local arrangements to encourage children and young people to live healthy lives are almost always successful.
- Improvements have been made to the provision of mental health services and more young people report they have good relationships with friends and family than is found nationally.
- More children say they enjoy access to parks and play areas than found elsewhere.
- Levels of obesity among five and 11 year olds are low; however local data show that obesity rates are rising for the older group.
- Fewer 16 year olds reported that they had recently been drunk or taken drugs in 2010 than in 2009.
- Teenage conception targets of 50% have not been met locally or nationally although performance across Central Bedfordshire is slightly better than for England and the Eastern Region. However there are six wards where teenage pregnancy is significantly higher than both the National and Regional average: these are Houghton Hall (79.9), Manshead (78.2) Tithe Farm (74), Parkside (66.7), Stanbridge (60.8) and Dunstable Central (52) have much higher rates of teenage conception than the national average of 40.5 per 1,000.

What we are going to do

Objective 10: Focus on early intervention including children's mental health services, childhood obesity, drugs and alcohol and sexual health

Actions

- Further develop and integrate early intervention services to ensure prompt and timely support for children and young people with emerging mental health problems.
- Develop services for children and young people with complex mental health needs, including eating disorders and self harm.
- Support the delivery of parenting support programmes with a focus on improving the emotional wellbeing of young people.
- Develop and deliver new childhood obesity prevention programmes and support the continuation and development of high quality physical activity for children and young people.
- Reduce drugs and alcohol misuse and continue to improve the quality of specialist drugs and alcohol treatment and planned discharges.
- Enhance family services, particularly services for young parents and those affected by drugs and alcohol issues and support the delivery of parenting programmes which address harmful and risky behaviours.
- Develop the children's workforce understanding of their role in increasing young people's access to sexual health and contraceptive services.



- Reduce the rate of teenage pregnancies by ensuring key engagement of all organisations that can have an impact on reduction: health, education, youth services, the voluntary sector and target work at vulnerable groups of young people.
- Build on the achievements and quality standards of the Healthy Schools Programme, to extend across all settings for children and young people.
- Supporting all settings for children and young people to meet specific health and education priorities, through an outcome based approach.
- Provide appropriate guidance, support and training in each of the key areas of children's emotional and physical health, for all staff working with children and young people.

What success looks like

- Reduction in obesity rates among primary school aged children in Reception and Year 6.
- Reduction in teenage conception rates.
- Reduction in diagnosis rates of sexually transmitted infections.
- Reduction in hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries to 5-18 year olds.

Objective 11: Transform services for disabled children

Actions

- Ensure the delivery of the programme, in particular the transformation of short break services.
- Ensure the strategic objectives of Better Care, Better Lives are implemented.
- Improve data available on numbers of disabled children and types of disability.
- Implement the new short break duty
- Improve the access to universal services for disabled children
- Agree integrated approaches with partner agencies
- Deliver the Transition Improvement Plan to provide a smooth transition into adulthood.
- Ensure parents, disabled children and young people are fully involved in the shaping and delivery of services.

What success looks like

- Effective implementation and monitoring of short breaks.

Cross cutting priority: Develop an integrated workforce which is ambitious for all children and their families and expert in its practice

- To understand the current and future workforce needs relating to sectors supporting this priority.
- Continue to develop the knowledge and skills of all those working with children, young people and families.
- Continue to provide develop and embed the 'Think Family' approach.
- Develop the workforce to deliver the transformation of services for disabled children.

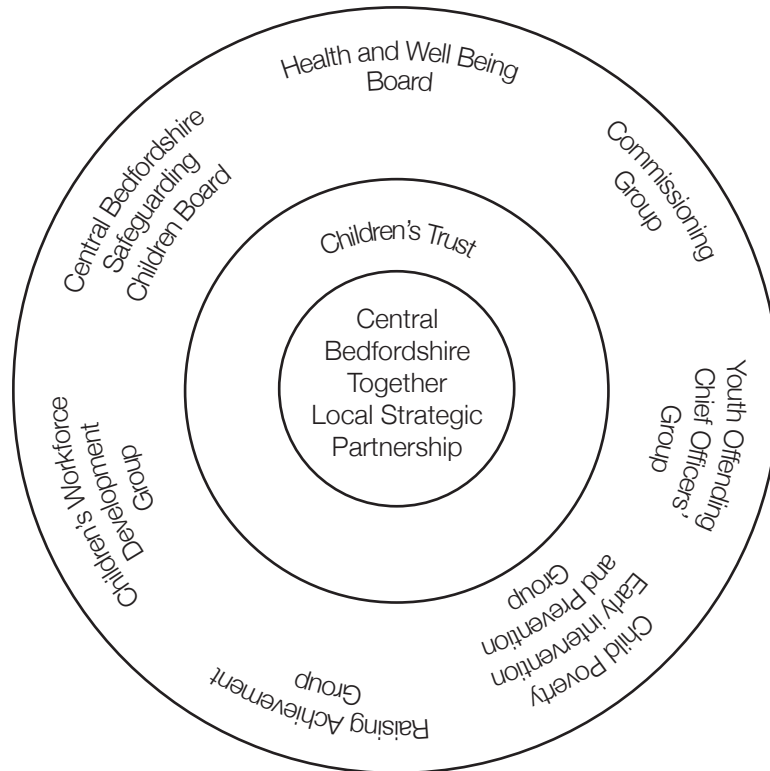
Supporting plans

- A Healthier Bedfordshire
- An Alcohol Strategy for Central Bedfordshire
- Child poverty strategy
- Economic strategy
- Workforce Development Strategy
- Bedfordshire Teenage Pregnancy Strategy
- NHS Bedfordshire's Sexual Health Strategy
- Public Health Improvement Plans



Managing our delivery, performance and resources

The following diagram represents the Children’s Trust arrangements and relationships:



Delivery plans for each of the priorities in the Children and Young People’s Plan will be developed, managed and delivered through Delivery Groups. These will set out the lead partner, strategic actions, the milestones and deliverables, the resource requirements (financial and human) the risks, the performance measures and targets. All activities will be developed and delivered within partners’ existing resource envelopes. Commissioned activities and the identification of the resource envelope to deliver the plan will be overseen by Commissioning Group.

Every quarter the Delivery Groups will review progress and the Leads of the Delivery Groups will report on their performance to the Trust Board. A basket of critical success measures has been identified to form the basis of the quarterly

reporting. These may have to be revised and changed to reflect the changes to the emerging national policy and performance framework. Targets for these success measures will also be agreed through Delivery Groups as the developing national picture becomes clearer.

The Children’s Trust will report quarterly on the following key indicators to the Central Bedfordshire Together, the Local Strategic Partnership, to demonstrate progress against the following priorities and outcomes in the Sustainable Community Strategy:

**Sustainable Community Strategy
Priority: Educating, protecting and providing opportunities for children and young people**

Outcome: Educational attainment is raised

- % of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in English and Maths at KS2
- % of pupils achieving A-C including English and Maths at GCSE
- Year on year improvement in the percentage of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate

Outcome: Truly vulnerable children are protected

- % of initial assessments within seven working days of referral
- % of children looked after at 31 March with three or more placements during the year
- Ensure that 100% of child protection cases which should have been reviewed during the year were reviewed
- % of referrals of children in need that led to initial assessments

The Children's Trust Board will monitor quarterly the following critical key indicators in order to assess progress against the four priorities in the plan:

Priority 1: Helping children and young people achieve more and transforming our relationship with schools

- % of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in English and Maths at KS2
- % of pupils achieving A-C including English and Maths at GCSE
- Year on year improvement in the percentage of pupils achieving the English Baccalaureate

Priority 2: Protecting children and keeping them safe

- % of initial assessments within seven working days of referral
- % of children looked after at 31 March with three or more placements during the year
- Ensure that 100% of child protection cases which should have been reviewed during the year were reviewed
- % of referrals of children in need that led to initial assessments
- Reduction in re-offending rates amongst young people
- Reduction in number of first time entrants to the youth justice system aged 10-17

Priority 3: Reducing child poverty and the effects for those living in poverty and improve early intervention and prevention

- Reduction in the proportion of children who live in relative low income to less than 10%
- Reduction in the percentage of young people not in education, employment or training

Priority 4: Targeting the most deprived area and vulnerable groups to improve children's emotional and physical health

- Reduction in obesity among primary school aged children in Reception and Year 6
- Reduction in the under 18 conception rates.





If you want to know more

For more information about Children's Trusts visit

www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

For more information about Central Bedfordshire's Children and Young People's Trust and Plan:

Visit: **www.centralbedfordshirechildrenstrust.org.uk**

Call: **0300 300 5265**

Email: **ask@centralbedfordshirechildrenstrust.org.uk**

Central Bedfordshire Children and Young People's Plan



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Foreword

Welcome to the first Children and Young People's Plan for Central Bedfordshire

This plan sets out our shared vision for children, young people and their families in Central Bedfordshire and it shows how we plan to achieve it. We know that most children and young people in Central Bedfordshire enjoy their childhood and go on to be confident and successful young adults – we want to make sure that we maintain this and improve the achievements and outcomes for those children and young people who are not doing as well.

We have set out in this plan those things we think are important to focus on over the next eighteen months. It is not a detailed account of all we plan to do but it does set out those things we think are critical to achieving our vision. There are a large number of more detailed strategies and plans which support the priorities set out in this plan.



We look forward to working with children, young people, their families and those involved in delivering services for them

We would like to thank all those that have been involved in the development of the plan. In particular the more than 4,000 children and young people who were asked what they think is important. Their ideas and priorities have helped to shape this plan. We look forward to working with children, young people, their families and those involved in delivering services for them, to tackle our challenges and celebrate our successes.



The Central Bedfordshire Children's Trust Board
On behalf of the Central Bedfordshire Children's Trust



Cllr Anita Lewis

Portfolio Holder Children's Services
Central Bedfordshire Council

Edwina Grant

Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children, Families and Learning
Central Bedfordshire Council

Jeff Wren

Learning and Skills Council



Ann Nevinson

Non-Executive Director
NHS Bedfordshire

Andrew Morgan

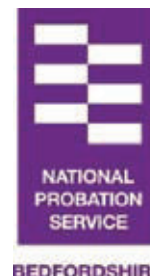
Chief Executive
NHS Bedfordshire

Andrew Street

Chief Superintendent
Bedfordshire Police



Voluntary Organisations for Children
young people & families



Michele Flynn

Chair
Voluntary Organisations for Children, young people & families

Linda Bulled

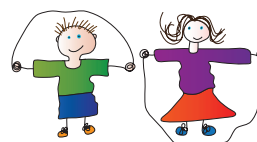
VOCypf Officer
Voluntary Organisations for Children, young people & families

Linda Hennigan

Chief Probation Officer
Bedfordshire Probation



Working Together to Safeguard Children



Laura Eades

Independent Chair
Bedfordshire Local Safeguarding Board

Maggie Blyth

Shadow Chair
Shadow Central Bedfordshire Local Safeguarding Board



Introduction

In 2003 the Government launched ‘Every Child Matters: Change for Children’ which set out a new way of thinking about how services for children, young people and their families are delivered. The result was the Children Act 2004 which provided the legislation for this new approach and which outlines the five key ‘Every Child Matters’ outcomes for all children and young people, whatever their background or circumstances. They are:

To be healthy

Enjoy good physical and mental health and live a healthy lifestyle

To stay safe

Be protected from harm and neglect and grow up able to look after themselves

To enjoy and achieve

Get the most out of life and develop broad skills for life

To make a positive contribution

To the community and society and not offend or behave in an anti-social way

To achieve economic well-being

Overcome disadvantages and achieve their full potential in life



The Children Act 2004 Section 10 requires that all local authorities with a children's services responsibility should make arrangements to promote cooperation between the authority and relevant partners with a view to improving the well-being of children and young people in the area. The Act establishes the Local Authority as the lead and accountable partner in such arrangements.

The expectation is that these arrangements, commonly known as Children's Trusts, should have been in place in all Local Authorities by the end of 2008 and that partners involved in Trusts should work together to develop a Children and Young People's Plan.

As a new unitary Authority we have set up our new Children and Young People's Trust. At its first meeting in April 2009 the Trust Board agreed to put in place the following arrangements to develop and implement our first Children and Young People's Plan:

- a Trust Board – made up of the strategic leaders of all partners and acting as the Executive of the Trust, agreeing and owning the priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan and any other relevant strategies;
- a Commissioning Executive - made up of those people who commission services from across the partners whose job is to understand the needs of children, young people and their families, work with partners to plan services around these needs and identify the best providers to deliver the services; and
- five Every Child Matters Outcome Delivery Groups – made up of key professionals from across the Trust involved in delivering services relating to the five Every Child Matters outcomes to make sure that services are delivered according to the agreed priorities.

There are also a number of partnerships and groups which the Trust has links with and which will help to deliver the priorities in the plan, including the Local Strategic Partnership, the Local Safeguarding Board, the Community Safety Partnership, the Healthier Communities and Older People Partnership and the Stronger Communities Thematic Partnership.



Our vision for Children and Young People in Central Beds

We want every child in Central Bedfordshire to enjoy their childhood and have the best possible start in life. We want every child to do well at school, make friends and build strong relationships with their family. By the age of 19, as young adults, we want every young person to have the knowledge, skills and qualifications that will give them the best chance of success, so that they are prepared to take their full place in society as a happy, healthy, contributing and confident citizen.



Living in Central Bedfordshire

Central Bedfordshire is home to approximately 252,100 people. Around 137,000 (54.4% of the population) people live in the towns with 36,540 in Leighton Linlade, 35,070 in Dunstable, 17,000 in Houghton Regis, 16,640 in Biggleswade, 13,310 in Flitwick, 11,690 in Sandy and 6,900 in Ampthill.

Around 63,000 children and young people between the ages of 0-19 live in Central Bedfordshire and by 2021 it is forecast that there will be about 2,000 more children aged under 16. The number of births in Central Bedfordshire has been around 3,000 for the last three years. The birth rate is slightly lower than the England and East of England rates and Central Bedfordshire's proportion of low birth weight babies is slightly lower than the East of England average.

Age range of children and young people population in Central Bedfordshire, 2007	
0 – 4	15,400
5 – 9	15,300
10 – 14	16,100
15 - 19	16,200
*ONS – estimates June 2007	

Central Bedfordshire is generally an affluent area and many children and young people in the area enjoy a very good quality of life and have excellent prospects in relation to both their own future happiness and their contribution to their communities. The health of our children and young people compares well with the East of England, and to England as a whole. Achievement across the age range from Early Years Foundation Stage to the end of Key Stage 4 is above national averages. None of our schools is in an Ofsted category of concern and we are on track to have 100% of extended services in schools by 2010. The percentage of school leavers going onto higher education is above

the regional and national average and we have low numbers of young people that are not in education employment or training (5.9%).

We know however, that there is a significant minority of children and young people for whom outcomes are much worse than those of the rest.

In terms of overall deprivation there are no areas in Central Bedfordshire which fall into the top 20% most deprived in England. However, for some of the individual aspects of deprivation (such as education, and crime) communities in parts of Dunstable, Houghton Regis and Sandy do fall into the worst 10% nationally.

We do also have some pockets of deprivation, and in total nine areas in 2007 were in the top 20% most deprived in the East of England and three of these were in the top 10% in the region. This means that around 27% of children in Central Bedfordshire live in low income or workless families and we know that children from poorer backgrounds are doing less well. In some areas up to 50% are living in low income families:

% and number of children in low income families		
Tithe Farm	50%	750
Parkside	49%	670
Manshead	47%	590
Northfields	40%	705
Houghton Hall	38%	670
Planets	34%	420
Plantation	32%	415
Dunstable Central	31%	310
All Saints	30%	315
Biggleswade Ivel	30%	51
Sandy Pinnacle	30%	550



What children and young people said

More than 4,000 children and young people helped shape the priorities in this Children and Young People's Plan. More information on how we did this set out in Appendix B and here are some of the things that children and young people said were important to them:

Be healthy

Children and young people wanted more opportunities to lead healthy lifestyles and felt that better play facilities in school grounds and more sports activities would help achieve this. They also asked for healthier and nice school meals.

“More stuff on healthy lifestyles”

“More accessible contraception coz some places want all your details if you ask for it”

Stay safe

Children and young people wanted safe areas to live and play and they wanted action to stop bullying out of school. They also felt it was important to stop bad behaviour and crime in their areas and for children and the Police to have more opportunities to talk.

“Stop big groups of young people walking around at night”

“Stop gang culture”

Enjoy and achieve

Help to do better at school was something that children and young people wanted and they also wanted more rewards for behaving and doing well at school.

“After school club to help us with Maths and English”

“Young people's celebration - like Young People of the Year Awards”

Make a positive contribution

As mentioned above, children and young people want more rewards for behaving and doing well. In particular they wanted to see good things about young people in newspapers and the media. They also felt that they needed more things to do, such as more groups and clubs to join and play schemes. Cheaper transport to get to places was highlighted as an issue and children and young people were concerned that those families who might need help to pay for activities for their children were given support.

“More music concerts - stuff for us to do, could have stalls on drug and alcohol too.”

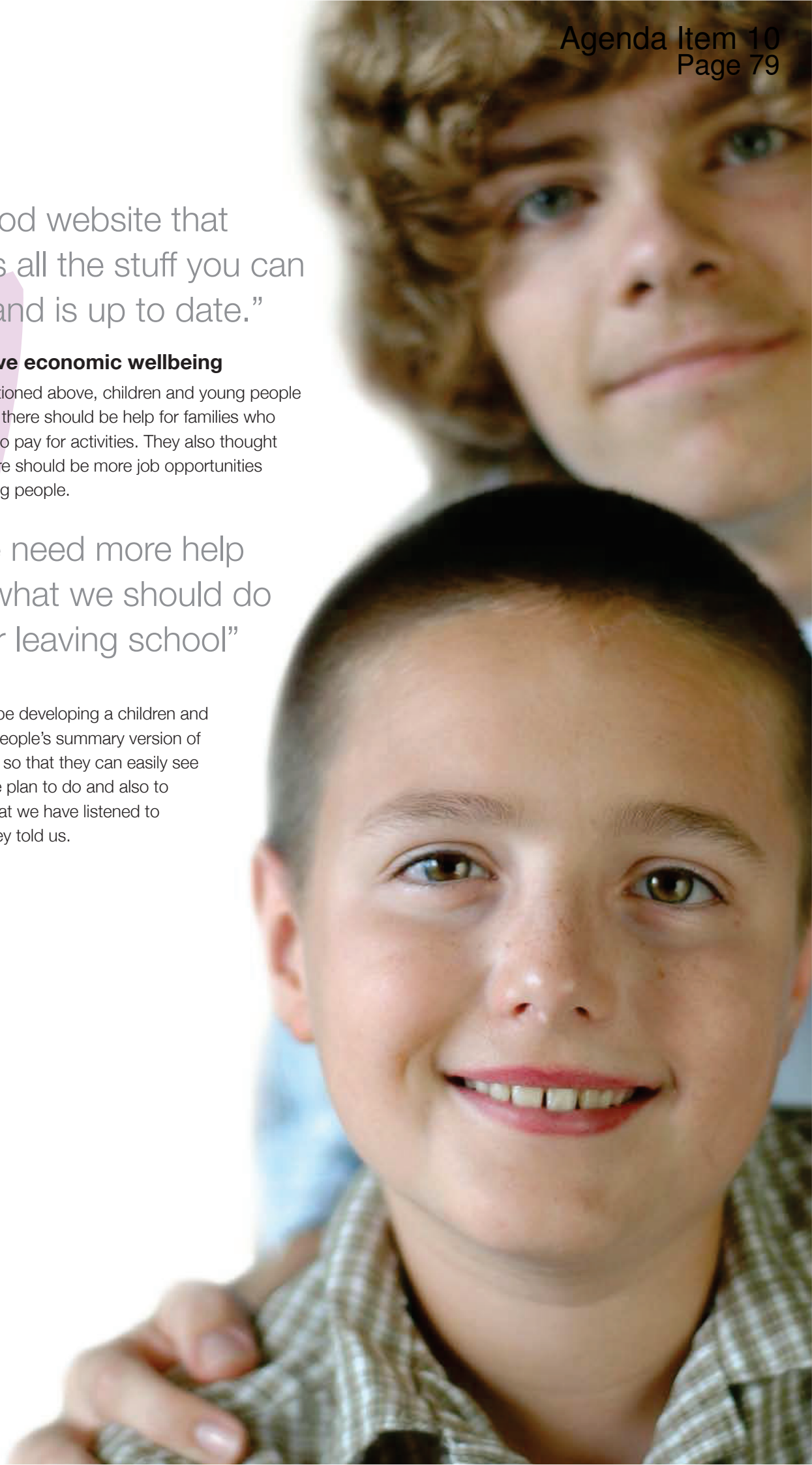
“Good website that says all the stuff you can do and is up to date.”

Achieve economic wellbeing

As mentioned above, children and young people thought there should be help for families who need it to pay for activities. They also thought that there should be more job opportunities for young people.

“We need more help on what we should do after leaving school”

We will be developing a children and young people’s summary version of the plan so that they can easily see what we plan to do and also to show that we have listened to what they told us.



Our priorities

Cross cutting priorities

In order to deliver the priorities set out in this plan there are a number of issues and programmes that underpin the work of all the partners. These cross cutting priorities will all have separate plans in place, linked to the Children and Young People's Plan and overseen by either an Every Child Matters Delivery Group or the Commissioning Executive. We will need to work together on the following to make sure we have the right building blocks in place and address the priorities in a co-ordinated way:

Improve prevention, early identification and intervention

Recognising as early as possible when children, young people and their families need advice and support is one of the most effective ways of improving outcomes and it is a key cross cutting priority for the Central Bedfordshire Children and Young People's Trust. This work will be monitored and reported through the 'Stay Safe' Delivery Group. To support this work we will:

- Implement an effective strategic plan to develop high quality, locally delivered, integrated services.
- Ensure earlier identification and intervention supported by a multi-agency workforce development programme.
- Implement further development of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and associated local practice initiatives.
- Develop a "Think Family" programme.
- Build on the success of our Early Years services and develop children's centres and our support for new parents and very young children.
- Intervene earlier and support those children, young people and families we have identified as being at risk: children and young people with mental health

problems, children where domestic abuse is a factor, disabled children, looked after children, young carers, gypsy and travelling communities, asylum seekers and homeless children, young offenders, teenage mothers; and

- Provide enhanced services for families where children and young people have been identified as being at risk of entering the care system.

What success looks like

- Local delivery of integrated services based on common processes, outstanding practice, strong partnerships and clearly identified pathways.
- Children, young people and families access appropriate services to meet their needs and lead to better outcomes.

This approach will be supported by an effective common process for working with children, young people and families – the Common Assessment Framework (CAF). We are reviewing our use of the common assessment framework, the Development of the Lead Professional Role and the design and operation of multi agency panels to support this approach.

Reduce child poverty

Children who grow up in poverty are less likely to get qualifications or go on to higher education, and are more likely to become young parents. People with low levels of educational achievement can expect to be less employable, therefore poorer, therefore less healthy and probably less likely to participate in civic activity. The kinds of people who are less likely to be employed are also more likely to be involved in crime, to have shorter life-spans and to have less fulfilling family lives. Whole families can be locked into cycles of deprivation.

Our long term aim is to reduce the number of children living in poverty in Central Bedfordshire. This is a key priority that will be monitored and reported through the 'Economic Wellbeing' Delivery Group and led out of the Stronger Communities Thematic Partnership of the Local Strategic Partnership. We aim to provide support to children, young people and their families who need assistance in improving their quality of life, particularly with regard to housing, transport, parenting and early year's intervention. To deliver this priority we will:

- Develop a child poverty strategy.
- Commission services to improve people's economic well-being so that they are accessible to those families with the greatest need.
- Provide stable accommodation for those under threat of homelessness.
- Provide subsidised transport and services for children, young people and their families.
- Learn from other agencies who are good at supporting families.
- Increase the number and use of our children's centres.

What success looks like

- Reduce the levels of child poverty (NI 116, LAA priority).
- Increase the range and availability of discounted services.
- Reduce the levels of homelessness.
- Increase the take up of childcare by low income working families.

Develop a locality based approach to delivering integrated services

In order to develop a locality based approach to delivering integrated services, partners will work together to identify and agree the need for co-located services, identify the priority services for re-configuration and develop plans to ensure we have integrated processes and information sharing to support this approach.

We have an ambitious agenda to deliver a wide variety of services for children and young people that are working together in local communities. Health, education and social care services will be set up as multi agency teams that use integrated processes and systems and a broader 'Think Family' approach.

This way of working will be more responsive to local need and will make it easier and simpler for children, young people and their families to access a variety of services in their own locality.



Developing the Children's Trust

As a new unitary area and a new partnership we have identified a number of things we need to do to strengthen partnership working so that we are well equipped for jointly delivering our priorities. A Trust Development Plan will be overseen by the Trust Board and to deliver this priority we will:

- Make sure we have the right people and partners involved in the Trust and that they have appropriate training and information;
- Make sure we are clear about our links and arrangements with other partnerships;
- Make sure that we are clear about what success looks like and that we monitor our progress and challenge each other;
- Develop the Trust Board, our Commissioning Executive and our Delivery Groups; and
- Develop a communications strategy so that everyone knows what the Trust stands for and what it offers and so that children, young people, families and partners all feel informed.

Increase opportunities for children and young people to play an active part in influencing the decisions that affect their lives and well-being

This is a key priority that will be monitored and reported through the 'Make a positive contribution' Delivery Group. To deliver this priority we will:

- Develop a comprehensive youth engagement and consultation plan which leads to increased opportunities for children and young people to play an active part in influencing the decisions that affect their lives and well-being.
- Further develop young people's active involvement in service design, delivery, and evaluation in relation to all providers through initiatives that develop their skills and abilities to inspect services and make valid contributions to the development of services that affect their lives.
- Build on the Young People's grant giving initiative, increasing young people's involvement in decisions about how funding is spent, and encouraging them to become involved in activities that increase opportunities for participatory budgeting activity. We want more young people to apply for the 'street cred' funds (Youth Opportunities Fund), particularly targeting the development of activity on Friday evenings and weekends.

What success looks like

- Young people believe that they can influence service delivery.
- A diverse range of inclusive mechanisms in place that demonstrate children and young people's involvement, voice and influence in decisions that affect their lives and well being, including comprehensive engagement in democratic processes and service design and delivery.
- Engagement and consultation with young people is centrally planned and co-ordinated ensuring communication is a two-way process and avoiding duplication.
- Raise awareness and interest in democracy, annually increasing the numbers of young people voting in youth cabinet elections.
- Have well established and promoted feedback mechanisms in place for children and young people.
- Children and young people are actively involved in service assessments.

Develop Strategic commissioning

Robust commissioning arrangements are seen as being increasingly important in making sure that services are effective, offer good value for money and improve outcomes for children and young people. During 2009 we will agree a Strategic Commissioning Framework that sets out how we will work together to commission cost effective, high quality services. This is a key priority for the Commissioning Executive.

Develop an integrated workforce which is ambitious for all children and their families and expert in its practice

Workforce development is the key to providing the right staff with the right skills to provide high quality services and transform outcomes for children, young people and their families. We are developing a workforce development strategy to ensure that we identify key areas of development and then put in place programmes to ensure new ways of working across all agencies. This is a key priority that will be monitored and reported through the 'Enjoy and Achieve' Delivery Group. To deliver this priority we will:

- Establish and promote a shared identity, vision, language, practices and services across the Children's Workforce.
- Develop integrated working and a single staff development framework based on a single needs analysis.
- Increase the use of Training hubs for learning in each area of Central Bedfordshire.
- Put safeguarding at the forefront of Workforce Development.

What success looks like

- Regular self assessment shows progress towards integrated working.
- The Children's workforce has shared goals, common language, flexible working practices and works within a common ethos.
- There is a common career development and qualifications framework that encourages movement across the Children's Workforce.



- Local needs for the recruitment, development and reform for the children's workforce are effectively identified and development programmes are matched explicitly to need.
- A single directory of workforce development has been compiled and made widely available, signposting both multi-agency (generic) and role specific development opportunities.

Develop the Family and Youth Information Service

Knowing what is on offer and where families can get help and information was a key issue that emerged during our consultation with children, young people, their families and our partners.

To address this we are planning to develop a Central Bedfordshire Family and Youth Information Service for children, young people their parents and carers and the professionals who work with them.

The information service will be key to achieving positive outcomes for children and young people so that information on choices, options and activities, rights and responsibilities is freely available. The service will meet statutory responsibilities for the provision of information placed upon us by legislation, and will be available to as many people as possible through a wide range of media; for example paper publications, websites and web based services, telephone advice lines, outreach, and consultancy and support services to professionals working within frontline services.

This is an innovative approach which combines the Connexions information and publications team and the Family Information Service to provide a broad based service that can grow and develop to meet the needs of Central

Bedfordshire's Children and Young People through the introduction of additional data for example, sections on positive activities and specialist Learning Difficulties and Disabilities provision are planned for 2010.

This is a priority that will be monitored and reported through the Make a Positive Contribution Delivery Group.

Equality and diversity

Equality is a Trust priority. The following equality and diversity principles have informed the development of the plan throughout the process.

- All learners and potential learners are of equal value.
- Consideration will be given to differences of life-experience, outlook and background, and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people face.
- Employment practices will benefit all members of the workforce, for example in recruitment and promotion, and in continuing professional development.
- The plan will promote positive attitudes towards disabled people, positive interaction and good relations between groups and communities and mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls, women and men.
- The plan will help foster greater cohesion, and greater participation in public life.
- Current inequalities and barriers will be addressed and reduced.

In developing the vision and priorities for the Children and Young People's Plan each of the Every Child Matters Delivery Groups considered a wide range of national equality evidence and identified groups or individuals that may have particular needs that are not being met by mainstream services.

The following groups of children who are vulnerable and who may not have prospects for good outcomes across the Every Child Matters outcomes were identified as a priority for the Trust: children and young people with mental

health problems, children in homes where domestic abuse is a factor, disabled children, looked after children, young carers, gypsy and travelling communities, asylum seekers and homeless children, young offenders, teenage mothers and children from disadvantaged communities.

Delivering services that support these children and young people and assessing their progress is a key priority that will be monitored and assessed by all the Delivery Groups as part of the ongoing Equality Impact Assessment process.



What we know

Health and wellbeing of children in Central Bedfordshire generally compares well to the rest of the East of England, and to England as a whole. In 2008/09:

- 77% of women in Bedfordshire* accessed antenatal care within 12 weeks of pregnancy (against a target of 80%).
- 15% of pregnant women in Bedfordshire* were reported to be smoking at time of delivery.
- 72% of women in Bedfordshire* initiated breastfeeding after delivery (against a target of 75%).
- 40% of women in Central Bedfordshire were still breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks after delivery (against a target of 39%).
- All immunisation targets were met except for MMR at age 5 years which was 72% against a target of 76% for Central Bedfordshire.
- 72% of schools in Central Bedfordshire have achieved National Healthy Schools Status.
- In 2008/09 Central Bedfordshire recorded 8% of children in the Reception school year as obese, and 14.3% of children in school year 6 as obese.
- Central Bedfordshire showed a teenage conception rate of 28.5, based on 2004-6 data. There is on average a 2 year time lag with this data set from the Office for National Statistics. However local intelligence suggests that teenage conception rates remain of concern in Central Bedfordshire, with particular 'hot spot' areas in Houghton Hall, Manshead, Tithe Farm, Parkside and Heath and Reach.
- In 2008/09 Bedfordshire* screened 16.4% of 15-24 year olds against a 17% target. In 2009/10 Central Bedfordshire will screen 25% of 15-24 year olds.
- In 2008 16% boys and 18% girls in Central Bedfordshire were reported to be smoking occasionally or regularly.
- Data suggest levels of drug use remain relatively stable amongst young people, with slight increases or decreases across the 4 year period from 2004-2008.
- Alcohol use has tended to remain stable with slight increases recorded in 2006. For example, those drinking between 4-20 units was recorded at 32% in 2004, increased to 39% in 2006 and fell again to 33% in 2008.
- The following have been identified as children in vulnerable circumstances who may have poorer health outcomes: children and young people with mental health problems, disabled children, looked after children, young carers, gypsy and travelling communities; asylum seekers and homeless children.

*Central Bedfordshire data not currently available

What we are going to do

Priority 1: Ensure a healthy start to life - including early access to antenatal care, reducing smoking and improving nutrition in pregnancy, promoting breastfeeding and increasing immunisation and vaccinations.

Strategic actions

- Improve choices for women to book by increasing numbers of midwifery led and community based booking clinics.
- Promote multi-agency approaches to improved ante, peri and postnatal care for women, making use of acute and community healthcare services and Children's Centres.
- Improve antenatal and postnatal breastfeeding support, through the implementation of the Healthy Child Programme and targeted programmes of work such as peer counsellors.
- Achieve UNICEF Baby Friendly status in the community.
- Expand stop smoking services for pregnant women, both through the Bedfordshire Stop Smoking Service and increased training provision to maternity and Children's Centre staff
- Support women to prevent re-starting smoking after delivery.

What success looks like

- Increase in the number of women accessing antenatal care within 12 weeks of pregnancy to 85% in 2009/10.
- Increase in breastfeeding initiation to 77% by 2009/10 and the continuation of breastfeeding to achieve a 6-8 week breastfeeding rate of 41% 2009/10 (NI 53).
- Reduce smoking during pregnancy to 15% or less in 2009/10.
- Achieve childhood immunisation rates in line with national NHS Vital Signs targets.

Priority 2: Ensure children and young people are able to make responsible decisions in relation to drugs, alcohol, and sexual health.

Strategic actions

- Ensure services are targeted in line with identified need, particularly teenage pregnancy services.
- Improve the quality of Personal, Social and Health Education in schools.
- Enhance our family services, particularly services for young parents and those affected by drugs and alcohol issues and support the delivery of parenting programmes which address harmful and risky behaviours.
- Improve the quality of specialist drugs/alcohol treatment, particularly planned discharges.
- Roll out new locality sexual health services across Central Bedfordshire.
- Continue to increase uptake of chlamydia screening services.



What success looks like

- Reduce smoking rates among young people from 13% to 9%, and stop young people from starting to smoke in 2009/10.
- Reduce numbers of young people misusing substances, including drugs and alcohol to 11.85% in 2009/10 (NI 115, LAA priority).
- Reduce the teenage conception rate to 23.2 per thousand (NI 112).
- Increase rates of Chlamydia screening for 15 to 24 year olds to 25%.

Priority 3: Promote, protect and treat the mental and emotional health of children and young people.

Strategic actions

- Further develop and integrate early intervention services to ensure prompt and timely support for children and young people with emerging mental health problems.
- Continue to develop the knowledge and skills of all those working with children and young people.
- Develop services for children and young people with complex mental health needs.
- Align Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMH) and Children's Learning Disability Services.
- Support the delivery of parenting support programmes with a focus on improving the emotional wellbeing of children and young people.

What success looks like

- To improve the effectiveness of child and adolescent mental health services, as rated through the self assessment framework. In 2008/09 a score of 13 was achieved, against a target of 13. The 2009/10 self assessment target is 15. (NI 51, LAA priority).

Priority 4: Support children and young people to lead healthy lifestyles including reducing smoking and childhood obesity and increasing physical activity and healthy eating.

Strategic actions

- Promote the Change 4 Life programme to all communities.
- Increase the capacity of childhood obesity management programmes.
- Expand current 0-5 years healthy living programmes.
- Develop and deliver new childhood obesity prevention programmes.
- Deliver the National Child Measurement Programme to regional and national targets.
- Provide a range of programmes within the extended services communities to give parents the skills and information they need to better manage their children's healthy weight.
- Support the further roll-out of the National Healthy Schools programme.
- Ensure the delivery of 2 hours of physical activity per week in schools, moving towards 5 hours per week where possible.

What success looks like

- Reduce levels of childhood obesity to 13.6% (NI56, LAA priority).
- 75% of schools in Central Bedfordshire to achieve National Healthy Schools status by December 2009 (local indicator).
- Increase take up of school lunches (NI 52).
- All schools delivering 2 hours per week of physical activity (NI57).

Priority 5: Transform services for disabled children.

Strategic actions

- Ensure the delivery of the Aiming High for Disabled children programme, in particular the transformation of short break services in line with the national indicators, priorities and timescales.
- Ensure that the strategic objectives of Better Care; Better Lives are implemented.
- Improve data available on numbers of disabled children and types of disability.
- Continue the roll out of the Early Support programme for disabled children 0 – 5 years
- Deliver the Transition Improvement Plan to provide a smooth transition into adulthood.
- Ensure parents, disabled children and young people are fully involved in the shaping and delivery of services.
- Develop the workforce to deliver transformation.

What success looks like

- Positive response from parents to the NI54 indicator on parental satisfaction (NI 54).
- A substantial increase and step change in short break provision which offers a range of options so that every disabled child and family can be offered a short break by 2011.
- Improved access to services for disabled children and young people.
- Clear plans for children and young people with palliative care needs and those requiring end of life care.
- Transparent transition pathway in place for all disabled young people older than 14.

Be Healthy – supporting plans

- A Healthier Bedfordshire
- NHS Bedfordshire Maternity Strategy
- An Alcohol Strategy for Central Bedfordshire



Stay Safe

What we know

- The majority of children and young people feel safe.
- 15% of boys and 13% of girls said they had been the victim of violence or aggression in the last 12 months in the area where they lived.
- 35% of girls report feeling they are afraid of going to school because of bullying compared to 16% of boys.
- 3,000 contacts in Bedfordshire for whom domestic violence has been recorded by children's social care.
- Above average rates of death for young males under 15 per 100,00 compared to England and the East of England.

What we are going to do

Priority 6: Protect children and young people from harm by providing a co-ordinated and effective safeguarding process.

Strategic actions

- Work closely with Trust partners to establish processes for identifying and responding to children whose safety is, or is likely to be, compromised.
- Establish a separate and effective Local Safeguarding Children Board by 2010.
- Engage with and deliver Central Bedfordshire's aspect of the Regional Improvement and Efficiency partnership (RIEP) safeguarding programme (ESP) so that high quality, evidence based safeguarding practice is consistently delivered.

What success looks like

- The new Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board is functioning effectively.
- The children's workforce is configured and trained to meet the Trust's safeguarding objectives, co-operating in a consistent, responsive and effective manner.
- Children and young people report feeling safer and know how to access help from a trusted source should it be needed.
- Inspections of Safeguarding services result in positive judgements about the effectiveness of those services.
- Reduce the percentage of referrals of children in need that led to initial assessments from 83.8% in 2008/09 to 80% (NI 68).

- 85% of initial assessments within seven working days of referral (NI59).
- Ensure that 100% of child protection cases which should have been reviewed during the year were reviewed (NI 67).

Priority 7: Reduce the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people.

Strategic actions

- Align activity which is intended to reduce the impact of domestic abuse within the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) business plan and Community Safety Partnership Domestic Abuse plan.
- Integrate research and best practice into multi-disciplinary training programmes so that the workforce is equipped to identify and respond to children exposed to domestic abuse.
- Review the multi-agency Domestic Abuse protocol.
- Develop and commission an appropriate range of services to respond to and reduce the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people.

What success looks like

- Clear identification of children and young people in situations of domestic abuse receiving an appropriate, timely and effective response.
- Children and young people report that they feel safer.

Priority 8: Reduce the incidence and impact of bullying on children and young people.

Strategic actions

- Further develop the Anti-Bullying Strategy to include out of school bullying.
- Incorporate bullying awareness into the Workforce Development Strategy.
- Align the anti-social behaviour strategy and anti-bullying strategy to ensure early identification and response.

What success looks like

- Children and young people report feeling safer.
- The incidence of bullying reduces.

Stay Safe – supporting plans

- Community Safety Partnership Plan
- Domestic Abuse Strategy
- Anti-Bullying Strategy
- Workforce Development Strategy
- LSCB Business Plan



Enjoy and Achieve

What we know

- Most children up until the age of 7 are doing well and achieving at Key Stage 1 with 80 out of 95 Lower schools currently seen as good or outstanding.
- On track to have 100% of extended services in schools by 2010.
- The performance of children and young people at the ages of 11 and 16 is improving, however, overall they perform less well than those in other areas.
- 15 out of 35 middle, primary and upper schools are seen as good or outstanding.
- The rate of fixed term exclusions is increasing.
- Children in certain groups do not achieve as well as their peers (boys, some ethnic minorities, children who are looked after and children on free school meals).
- Contact with nature, access to the countryside and outdoor activities, play, sport and leisure all have significant and beneficial impacts on families, children and young people.

What we are going to do

Priority 9: Transform teaching and learning and strengthen leadership to ensure that every school and early years' setting is at least good.

Strategic actions

- Review support services to ensure schools and early years settings have effective, targeted support where it is most needed with a focus on prevention and early intervention.
- Increase the percentage of schools and early years settings judged to be good or outstanding.

- Ensure that all schools and settings are safe and that children and young people can make informed decisions.
- Strengthen leadership in schools and early years settings through effective self-evaluation and challenge.
- Ensure that children and young people enjoy their learning.
- Develop and implement a vision for future learning in Central Bedfordshire expressed through the 0-19 Strategy for Change which has an innovative, engaging and continuous curriculum centred on the individual needs of the learner and which promotes health and well-being, harnesses new technologies, is community-focused, global and enables achievement and enjoyment.
- Develop a shared approach to teaching and learning which ensures that children and young people experience effective transitions within and between each place of learning.

What success looks like

- Support is deployed in proportion to need, it is pre-emptive and has a positive effect.
- Increase the percentage of upper schools judged as good from 50% to 80% by 2011.
- Increase the percentage of middle/primary schools judged as good from 43% to 72% by 2011.
- Increase the percentage of lower schools judged as good from 84% to 86% by 2011.
- No schools in special measures (NI 89).
- Increase the percentage of secondary schools judged as having good or outstanding standards of behaviour from 82% to 91% by 2011 (NI 86).

- Children and young people recognise when they are at risk and can make informed and safe decisions.
- Increase to 80% Ofsted judgements on effective leadership and management in schools and/or schools' capacity for sustained improvement.
- Improve attendance rates by keeping the persistent absence rate below 4.76% (NI 87), improving exclusion rates (NI 114) and making sure more 16-18 year olds are in full-time education, training or employment (NI 117).
- School Improvement Partners and learners report that learning is continuous and builds on prior learning.
- Assessment practices and tracking of success are effective and helping to raise achievement for young people.
- Promote a supportive, caring climate for learning to improve enjoyment of learning for all and to reduce levels of unacceptable behaviour and persistent absence.
- To promote social and emotional health and well-being.
- Improve the core skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT by supporting schools in developing effective strategies and teaching approaches geared to narrow achievement gaps.
- Develop and commission a range of targeted, early-intervention strategies/ programmes to ensure all learners make progress, attend regularly, participate in learning and enjoy their learning.

Priority 10: Raise achievement for all learners particularly underachieving groups and children in vulnerable circumstances.

Strategic actions

- Develop a culture for learning which is based on high aspirations for all, is inclusive and accessible, celebrates success and diversity, promotes community cohesion, promotes participation, is safe for risk-taking, promotes quality teaching, learning and assessment, harnesses technology wisely and which raises levels of achievement for all.
- Develop collaborative approaches to leadership and learning for the benefit of all learners.
- Develop high quality learning environments, approaches to teaching and learning and programmes of learning which are accessible to all and in which day-to-day teaching is at least good.

What success looks like

High levels of learner satisfaction and well-being.

- More than 75% of young people report that they have good relationships (NI 50).
- Ofsted scores of more than 75% for effective leadership and management, promoting well-being, community cohesion and equality.
- Healthy schools targets are met.
- Increase the percentage of secondary schools judged as having good or outstanding standards of behaviour from 82% to 91% by 2011 (NI 86).
- Persistent absence rate below 4.76% (NI 87).
- No schools judged as requiring special measures (NI 89).
- A shared understanding and models of collaborative leadership that are used and developed across schools and phases.



Learners learn effectively and make at least 'good progress' .

- At least 86% of young people achieve 2 levels of progress Key Stage 1-2 in English (NI 93).
- At least 89% of young people achieve 2 levels of progress Key Stage 1-2 in Maths (NI 94).
- 100 pupils take up the 14-19 Diplomas offered (NI 90).
- Scores of more than 75% for Ofsted judgements in relation to the quality of learning and progress for pupils' and the quality of learning and progress for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- 82.3 % of children achieve at least 78 points across all 6 areas of learning at the Early Years Foundation Stage (NI 72).
- 82% of young people achieve level 4 or above in English and Maths at Key Stage 2 (NI 73).
- 56% of young people achieve 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent inc. English and Maths (NI 75).
- No schools with fewer than 55% of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in English and Maths at Key Stage 2 (NI 76).
- No schools with fewer than 30% of pupils achieving A*-C inc. English and Maths at GCSE (NI 78).
- 76% of young people achieve a Level 2 qualification by the age of 19 (NI 79).
- 52% of young people achieve a Level 3 qualification by the age of 19 (NI 80).
- Reduce the inequality gap in the achievement of a Level 3 by the age of 19 to 21% (NI 81).

- Reduce the inequality gap in the achievement of a Level 2 by the age of 19 to 60% (NI 82).
- 55% of young people achieve 2 or more A*-C grades in Science GCSEs or equivalents (NI 84).
- Increase the number of young people taking physical sciences post-16 – Physics (2008 = 109), Chemistry (2008 = 100) and Maths (2008 = 148)(NI 85).
- 1414 learners achieve a Level 1 qualification in Literacy (NI 161).
- 311 learners achieve a Level 1 qualification in Numeracy (NI 162).

Children and young people who are underachieving, disadvantaged in vulnerable circumstances, looked-after, at risk of exclusion and gifted or talented make at least the expected level of progress for their age and situation.

- Narrowing the gap between the lowest achieving 20% in Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the rest (target: between 32-35) (NI 92).
- 2 out of 5 children in care reach level 4 in English at Key S2 (NI 99).
- 2 out of 5 children in care reach level 4 in Maths at KS2 (NI 100).
- 3 out of 21 children in care achieve 5 A*-C GCSEs or equivalents at Key Stage 4 including English and Maths (NI 101).
- Reduce the achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers achieving the expected level at KS2 and KS4: KS2 = 20%; KS4 = 23% (NI 102).
- Reduce to 48% the gap between pupils who are identified as having special educational

needs who achieve the expected national curriculum level 4 or above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 2 and pupils who have not been identified as having special educational needs.

- Reduce to 41% the gap between pupils who are identified as having special educational needs who achieve 5 A*-C including English and Maths (NI 105).
- Reduce the gap in attainment at Key Stage 2 between all pupils and Black and Minority ethnic groups: Gypsy, Roma Travellers = 30%; Any other white = 72%; White/Black Caribbean = 75%; Black and White African Combined: 75% (NI 107).
- Reduce the gap in attainment at GCSE level for Black and Minority ethnic groups: Gypsy, Roma, Traveller = 25%; Any Other White = 63%; White/Black Caribbean = 45%; white and Black African Combined = 0% (NI108).



Priority 11: Improve engagement and enjoyment for all children and young people

Strategic actions

- Improving extended school services, out of hours learning, and a wide range of outdoor recreational and play activities and opportunities including volunteering.
- A programme of positive, out-of-hours/ extra-curricular activities for children and families that involves innovative approaches to learning, play and recreation at a range of localities.
- Pyramids of schools to produce comprehensive development plans for out-of-hours learning and positive activities and submit these to the LA along with regular financial breakdowns of spend to date.
- Develop Playing for Success study support programme within Central Bedfordshire.
- Providing effective support for children who are not engaged with learning and are at risk of exclusion.
- Review support for the most vulnerable children and young people, developing and implementing an effective integrated service structure including locality based resources such as short stay schools or other effective interventions for children who are not engaged with learning and who are at risk of exclusion.
- Establish and strengthen behaviour and attendance partnerships within four geographical localities.
- Develop parental involvement from the start regarding support and consultation structures.



What success looks like

- 85% of schools meet the full core offer of extended services by Sept 2009 and all schools meet the full core offer by 2010.
- There is an increased range of opportunities within the community for all children and young people, including those with disabilities.
- All pyramids have a development plan in place that is being implemented, monitored and evaluated.
- Study support programmes are available including the establishment of Playing for Success hubs.
- Roles and responsibilities at all levels are understood resulting in improved behaviour with the number of exclusions reduced and improved attendance and reduction in number of NEETs.
- Guidance, support materials and directories of behaviour support are agreed, published and well-received by schools; Attendance rates (NI 87 Persistent absence rate below 4.76%), the number of 16-18 year olds in full-time education, training or employment (NI 117) and permanent. exclusion rates (NI 114) show good improvement; Children and young people respond positively to local and national surveys about the provision.
- Parent involvement is well established and all families and children have early access to intervention so behaviour and learning is improved and children are engaged in learning in mainstream settings.

Enjoy and achieve – supporting plans

- Transforming Learning/Building Schools for the Future (Business Transformation Project)
- Locality Based Services (Business Transformation Project)
- Workforce Development Strategy (Business Improvement Project)
- E-Learning Strategy
- Behaviour and Attendance Plan



Make a Positive Contribution

What we know

- Children and young people were allocated £600,160 in grants for positive activities resulting in 82 new projects across Central Bedfordshire over the last three years.
- Anecdotal evidence of a wide range of activities on offer for children and young people, however there is a need for greater co-ordination and marketing of these opportunities.
- There is a perceived gap in provision for 8-12 year olds in relation to positive activities.
- Children and young people with special education needs or a disability and those who are young carers, looked after or from particular communities are often unable to access universal provision.
- Costs and transport constraints stop some young people from accessing provision.
- Offending behaviour by young people has significantly reduced over the past 5 years.
- There are still too many young people in custody – 18 custodial events relating to 15 young people in 2008/2009 was a custody rate of 10.1%.

What we are going to do

Priority 12: Develop and promote children and young people's positive contribution to communities across Central Bedfordshire.

Strategic actions

- Develop a positive image campaign to promote and champion children and young people's achievement and contribution to their communities.

- Offer and promote positive activities for children and young people at key times including Friday evenings and weekends.
- Create opportunities for young people to engage in volunteering.
- Improve access to a range of high quality outdoor formal and natural play spaces.

What success looks like

- Positive images of young people on display consistently across partner agencies and within the wider community.
- Young people have a wide range of easily accessible volunteering opportunities.
- Relevant and meaningful youth provision across Central Bedfordshire on Friday evenings and weekends.
- Increase the percentage of year 10 students participating in positive activities from 73.9% to 77.9% by March 2010 and 82.9% by March 2011 (NI 110 – LAA priority).

Priority 13: Reduce youth offending and anti-social behaviour.

Strategic actions

- Reduce re-offending rates amongst young people.
- Reduce first time entrants into the Youth Justice System.
- Reduce the high level of custodial sentences.

What success looks like

- Achieving national and local targets relating to youth offending.



- Perception of crime reduced.
- To meet the national custody rate target of 5% - this would require 8 young people less to be sent to prison during 09/10.
- Sustain the successful development of Junior Youth Inclusion Projects aimed at vulnerable and challenging young people aged 8 -13.

Priority 14: Promote and provide activities and information for all children and young people and their families, ensuring that the hard to reach and those with disabilities can take part in mainstream activities.

Strategic actions

- Increase children and young people's participation in positive activities.
- Enhance and further develop accessible information, advice and guidance provision for children, young people and families and the professionals who work with them, through the design and development of the Central Bedfordshire Family and Youth Information Service.
- Ensure the quality of information provision through the development of a comprehensive, informative, advice and guidance strategy which meets national standards.
- Develop integrated working between providers to enhance existing opportunities for children, young people and families as part of the leisure and culture strategy.
- Develop and promote play, leisure, sport and cultural opportunities for children and young people of all ages and in particular those aged 8-12.

- Shape and deliver services in our youth and leisure centres, creating a welcoming and inclusive approach for children and young people with disabilities and special needs.

What success looks like

- Increase the numbers of young people participating in positive activities from 73.9% to 82.9% in 2011 (NI 110 – LAA priority).
- Accessible delivery mechanisms offering information, advice and guidance within local areas such as One Stop Shops, online and telephone advice services.
- Increased number of children and young people with disabilities and special needs using youth and leisure provision.
- Positive activity through Integrated Youth Support Provision supports young people's attainment and personal development through accredited awards.

Priority 15: Strengthen and improve relationships within families by encouraging positive parenting.

Strategic actions

- Strengthen communities through innovative family and community involvement.
- Implementing Think Family reforms across Children, Health and Adult services, developing protocols across Children's, Health and Adult services for identifying, referring and planning how the needs of other family members can be met alongside those of their client.
- Delivery of Parenting Early Intervention Programme.

- Support and maintain existing parenting support services.
- Delivery of the strengthening families 10–14 and Triple P parenting programmes across Central Bedfordshire.
- Start up and delivery of the Family Intervention Project, providing intensive support to families in the greatest difficulty with children at risk of offending.

What success looks like

- Increased number of parents completing parenting programmes or individual casework support.
- Improvements in parents and their children communicating effectively and respectfully. Parents demonstrating positive parenting and problem solving skills with greater belief in their competence.
- Parents surveyed reporting sustained benefits.
- 150-200 parents participating in evidence based parenting programmes annually.
- Increased number of parents (particularly fathers) participating in parenting programme demonstrating improvements in:
 - their knowledge and understanding of child development and behaviour;
 - positive parenting and problem solving skills and greater belief in their competence.

Make a positive contribution – supporting plans

- Integrated Youth Support Plan.
- Information, Advice and Guidance Strategy.
- Not in Employment Education or Training Strategy.
- Community Strategy.
- Cultural Strategy.
- Youth Offending Service Plan.
- Parenting Support Plan.
- Plan B plans.

Achieve Economic Wellbeing

What we know

- Children from poorer backgrounds are doing less well and are more likely to die from an accident in childhood, have low educational achievement, turn to crime, be poor as an adult and raise their own children in poverty.
- 27% of children in Central Bedfordshire live in low income families and 12% live in workless families. In parts of Houghton Regis and Dunstable between 45% and 50% of children live in low income households.
- The inequality gap at age 19 for achievement at either level 2(GCSE or equivalent) or level 3 (A level or equivalent) places Central Bedfordshire in the bottom quartile.
- Low levels of young people going on to higher education in Tithe Farm (7.9%), Parkside (10.5%), Biggleswade Stratton (11.7%) and Sandy Pinnacle (12.8%) compared to England (24.3%). Northfields, Dunstable Central, Manshead, Planets and Houghton Hall also fall below the England average.
- Around 6% of 16 to 18 year olds are not in education, employment or training (NEET).
- 66.7% of care leavers are in employment education and training which is above the national average (64.9%) but below the region and comparator authorities (68%).

What we are going to do

Priority 16: Develop a locality approach in reducing the number of young people Not in Employment Education (NEET) or training, targeting those areas with the highest NEET levels.

Strategic actions

- Develop one stop shop multi-agency settings in our four priority areas.
- Identify needs and interests of NEET young people and work with employers, colleges and training providers to develop appropriate opportunities.
- Ensure all young people receive a comprehensive and high quality programme of careers education, information, advice and guidance to support effective decision making in relation to learning and/or work.

What success looks like

- Reduce the percentage of young people not in education, employment or training from 5.8% to 5% by 2011 (NI 117, LAA priority).

Priority 17: Work with employers, colleges and schools to increase the range and quality of local training, volunteering and job opportunities.

Strategic actions

- Co-ordinate the promotion of local job opportunities.
- Increase the range of services in school settings.
- Provide increased training and work experiences for 14-16 year olds.

- Develop our workforce's ability to serve our customers.
- Develop apprenticeship opportunities within public services.
- Work with adult services to enable vulnerable groups of young people make a smooth transition to adulthood through more informed choices and opportunities to benefit from an enhanced range of education, employment and training.

What success looks like

- Provide more jobs, volunteering and training opportunities.
- Increase the number of apprenticeships available.

Priority 18: Inspire our most vulnerable young people to raise their aspirations and provide integrated support particularly to care leavers, young offenders, young carers, young people with physical and learning disabilities, gypsy and traveller children and teenage parents.

Strategic actions

- Provide support to parents of excluded children.
- Consult children and their families at regular intervals.
- Develop information sharing protocols with colleges and training providers to improve transition support at 16+.
- Ensure that as young people with a disability move into adulthood, they have access to the same life opportunities as everyone else.
- Actively engage with Aim Higher to raise the aspirations of young people.

What success looks like

- Every child leaving care has a pathway plan.
- Improved achievement of level 2 and 3 qualifications of vulnerable young people.
- Increased entrants into higher education.
- Increased number of care leavers and young offenders in education, employment or training.
- Multi-agency transition plans for vulnerable young people moving into adulthood.

Achieve economic wellbeing – supporting plans

- Child poverty strategy
- Strategy for change
- Homelessness strategy
- Workforce strategy
- Economic strategy
- Cultural strategy



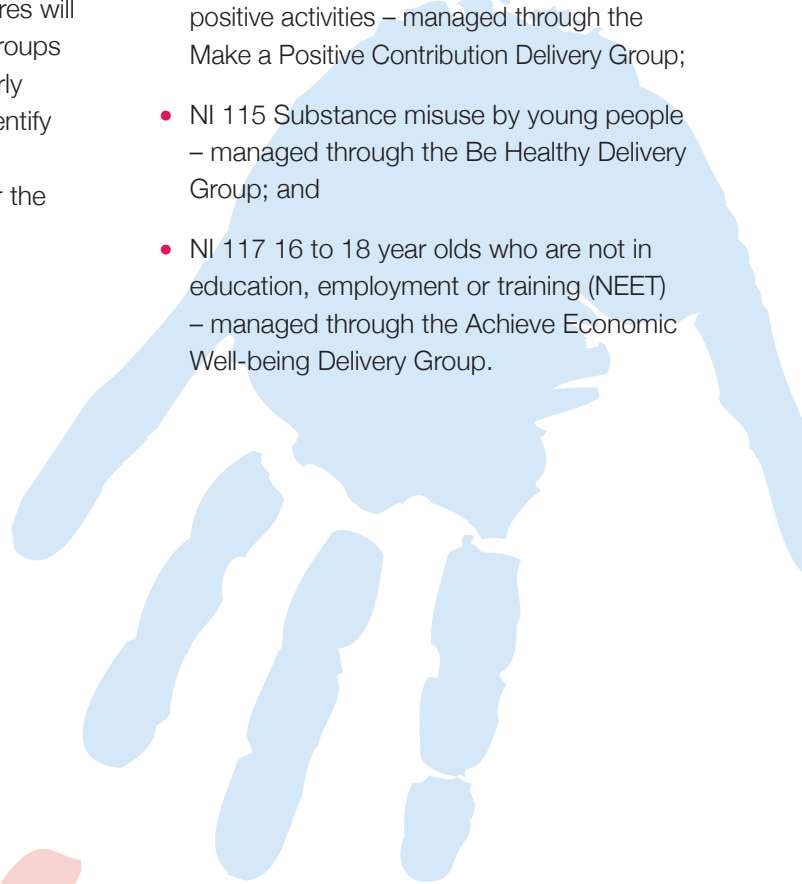
Appendix A: Managing our performance and resources

Delivery plans for each of the priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan will be developed, managed and delivered through the five Every Child Matters Delivery Groups. These will set out the lead partner, strategic actions, the milestones and deliverables, the resource requirements (financial and human) the risks and the performance measures.

Every quarter the Delivery Groups will review progress and the Leads of the Delivery Groups will report on their performance to the Trust Board. A basket of critical success measures will be identified by each of the five Delivery Groups and these will form the basis of the quarterly reporting. Each Delivery Group will also identify a key priority indicator which will provide a particular focus for partnership working for the Trust and the Delivery Groups.

The Trust has also endorsed the following Local Area Agreement indicators as key priorities for the Children and Young People Plan.

- NI 51 Effectiveness of child and adolescent mental health (CAMHs) services – managed through the Be Healthy Delivery Group;
- NI 56 Obesity among primary school age children in Year 6 – managed through the Be Healthy Delivery Group;
- NI 110 Young people's participation in positive activities – managed through the Make a Positive Contribution Delivery Group;
- NI 115 Substance misuse by young people – managed through the Be Healthy Delivery Group; and
- NI 117 16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) – managed through the Achieve Economic Well-being Delivery Group.



The Trust will be accountable to the Local Strategic Partnership for these National Indicators (NIs) which will be monitored by the Government through Go East.

The Trust Board also has an interest in influencing and monitoring a number of other Local Area indicators which are led by other Thematic Partnerships of the LSP but which are part of the broader families' agenda for Children's Trusts. These include:

- a. NI 163 Working age population qualified to at least Level 2 or higher;
- b. NI 8 Adult participation in sport;
- c. NI 116 Proportion of children in poverty (a local indicator in the Local Area Agreement);
- d. NI 198 Children travelling to school - mode of travel usually used; and
- e. NI 123 16+ current smoking rate prevalence.

As a new unitary area the performance framework includes a number of national and local indicators for which partners do not have either baseline or trend data. The Delivery Groups will be working to establish baseline information for these indicators so that partners can agree targets for future years. These will be agreed when the Children and Young People's plan and the delivery plans are reviewed.



Appendix B: Consultation with children and young people

The consultation with children and young people was conducted in 3 stages

Stage 1:

We asked a number of youth groups 'what they would like Central Bedfordshire to do for them'. Groups varied and included: Hurricane, Connexions Teenage Pregnancy group, Potton Travellers, Young Carers, Urban dance groups, Looked After Children, Youth Cabinet, African Caribbean and various disability groups. This exercise allowed the children and young people to say what they feel is a priority for them.

The total number of children and young people consulted was 550.

Stage 2:

Following on from stage 1, we then collated all of the answers and produced a questionnaire that was then taken into 3 lower schools (Meppershall, Hadrian and Robert Peel) 3 middle schools (Parkfields, Burgoyne and Edward Peake) and 3 upper schools (Stratton, Samuel Whitbread and Sandy). Using a voting system the children and young people were asked to vote for their 1st and 2nd choice on what service providers should do for them. The second stage was fun and interactive, with the children, young people and teachers being able to see the results straight away.

The total number of children and young people consulted was 1050.



Stage 3:

To test that we had understood children and young people's priorities we then organised a final consultation exercise. Based on what the children and young people said in stage 1 and stage 2, we then produced a questionnaire which set out 'What young people have told us' and 'What we are going to do'. The main aim of the consultation was to clarify that we understood what the children and young people of Central Bedfordshire were saying to us. Stage 3 involved visiting different lower, middle and upper schools. Schools who took part in stage 3 included: Potton Lower, St Georges Lower, Thomas Johnson Lower, Southill Lower, Hitchmead Special School, Henlow Middle, Arnold Middle, Holmemead Middle, Redborne Upper, Vandyke Upper, Queensbury Upper and Harlington Upper, 2670.

In addition to this we had 81 responses online.

The total number of children and young people consulted with were 4351.

By undertaking three different stages of consultation we have achieved both qualitative and quantitative results from children and young people who live or go to school in Central Bedfordshire. All of the results have been broken down further into: gender, demographical area, schools and ethnicity.





If you want to know more

For more information about Children's Trusts visit

www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

For more information about Central Bedfordshire's Children and Young People's Trust and Plan:

Visit: **www.centralbedfordshirechildrenstrust.org.uk**

Call: **0300 300 5265**

Email: **ask@centralbedfordshirechildrenstrust.org.uk**

Meeting: Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date: 28 June 2011
Subject: Post 16 Transport Policy
Report of: Executive Member for Children's Services, Cllr Mark Versallion
Summary: The report asks for Scrutiny to have a discussion on the responses to the consultation on proposed changes to the Post 16 Transport Policy which was agreed by the Council's Executive on 15th March 2011. This was previously scrutinised by Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 25 January 2011. At the time of agreeing the policy, the Executive asked that the policy be further reviewed for 2012/13. A proposed changed policy has been consulted upon. This proposed changed policy will be considered at the meeting alongside a presentation from the Executive Member and Director on a number of alternative considerations. The Committee are asked to advise the Executive Member on the range of options presented and any new suggestions they may wish to make.

Advising Officer: Edwina Grant, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services
Contact Officer: Sylvia Gibson, Assistant Director Learning and Strategic Commissioning
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The proposals relate to the second of the Council's key priorities::

- Educating, protecting and providing opportunities for children and young people.

The proposals also support the following priorities set out in the Children and Young People's Plan:

- Helping children and young people achieve more and transforming our relationship with schools
- Protecting children and keeping them safe
- Reducing child poverty and the effects for those living in poverty and improving early intervention and prevention

Financial:

The proposed changes to the Policy as attached at Appendix A, if amended according to paragraphs 14 – 18 of this report and if approved by the Council, would result in budget savings whilst ensuring that those entitled to support and those who are the most vulnerable are able to access post 16 provision.

The cost of providing Post 16 Transport in the financial year 2010/11 was £1.79m. The parental contribution in 2010/11 towards post 16 transport costs was £193k, requiring the council to provide funding of approximately £1.6m. Transport is provided on a subsidised basis for certain students and is free for others. It is estimated that the cost for the 2011/12 academic year will increase by 4% as more students access post 16 provision, in line with the raising of the participation age in 2013. The proposals outlined in this policy will ensure that the cost per student is reduced.

Appendix B shows that the savings from the policy agreed in March 2011 are projected to be £324,650,000 in 2013/14 if no further change is made. The savings would be £601,010 for 2013/14 if the Executive agrees the change to the policy now set out. In 2012/13 the total saving would be £433,898k to show part year effect.

These savings should be set against the Children's Services contribution to cross cutting savings on transport planned in 2011/12 which is £1,054m out of a Council cross cutting saving of £1,350m in 2011/12 and £130k in the medium term plan for 2012/13, subject to further efficiency reviews. These separate efficiencies will be made by reviewing and re-procurement of routes

The budget figures attached at Appendix B are projections and should be viewed as indicative savings. These projections do not take account of any costs which might be required to mitigate the environmental effects of increased car use to schools and colleges.

Members of the Scrutiny Committee are also asked to indicate ideas which they consider should be subject to financial evaluation as alternatives to the policy at Appendix A, if amended according to paragraphs 14 – 18 of this report.

Legal:

For the 2009/10 and 2010/11 academic years, Central Bedfordshire Council adopted the previous policy of Bedfordshire County Council. For the 2011/12 academic year, Central Bedfordshire Council adopted a new policy to meet updated national guidelines and to align with the current Home to School Transport Policy.

The Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 amended the Education Act 1996 in relation to the provision of transport for persons of sixth form age. The Council has a duty to publish a Transport Policy statement annually that will detail the arrangements that will be made for students to access schools, colleges or any establishment at which the local authority or the Young People's Learning Agency secures education or training. The statement should include details of any financial assistance that will be made available, and detail any travel concessions which are provided under the Transport Act 1985.

Risk Management:

Any changes to the policy will meet current legislative requirements as described above. The new policy will be fairer and more equitable for all families.

There is the potential for an adverse reaction from young people and their parents where policy changes result in the provision of previously free or subsidised transport being removed. Therefore, it is important that the Council conducts effective consultation on any proposed changes to the current policy and takes careful note of the outcome of the consultation before reaching decisions.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

There would be no immediate impact upon staffing levels within the Council although staffing resources would be kept under review as any policy change is implemented and is shown at Appendix B.

Equalities/Human Rights:

Central Bedfordshire Council has a statutory duty to promote race, gender and disability equality and to tackle discrimination experienced by other vulnerable groups. An Equality Impact Assessment is being undertaken as part of the development of the policy. This will be revised and updated once the outcome of the consultation on the proposals is known. The Central Bedfordshire Equality Forum will also consider the draft policy and equality impact assessment.

Community Safety:

The Council does not have a statutory obligation to consider the Safe Routes requirements for post 16 students. The proposals do recognise that support must be made available to protect vulnerable children.

Sustainability:

Central Bedfordshire Council has developed and adopted a strategy which meets its Statutory Duty under the Educational and Inspections Act (2006) to promote sustainable travel and transport. This is entitled 'Sustainable Travel to Schools and Colleges: A Strategy for Central Bedfordshire' and forms an important part of Central Bedfordshire's 'Access to Services' part of the Local Transport Plan 2011 - 2026 which was adopted by the Council Executive in March 2011. The proposed changes to the Post 16 Transport Policy at Appendix A, if amended according to paragraphs 14 – 18 of this report as the option consulted upon, or in the case of any other options, will take into account Central Bedfordshire's duty to promote travel by sustainable modes to educational establishments as set out in the strategy.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1. That the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers and comments on the proposed changes to the Post 16 Transport Policy as set out at Appendix A, if amended according to paragraphs 14 – 18 of this report, alongside any other options they consider should be developed resulting from discussion following the presentation by the Executive Member and Director. The Executive will then consider the next steps at their meeting in August 2011.**

Background

1. The Council is required to have a Post 16 transport policy. For the 2009/10 and 2010/11 academic years Central Bedfordshire Council adopted the previous policy of Bedfordshire County Council. For the 2011/12 academic year, Central Bedfordshire Council adopted a new policy to meet updated national guidelines and to align with the current Council Home to School Transport Policy. The Executive at its meeting on 15 March 2011 agreed to a further review of the policy for implementation in 2012/13.
2. A local authority does not have a statutory responsibility to provide free home to school or college transport for 16-19 year old students. However it does have a statutory responsibility to consider how it will assist learners to access the appropriate post 16 provision.
3. The Education and Skills Act 2008 states that the compulsory participation age will increase to 17 in 2013 and to 18 in 2015. It is important to ensure that appropriate provision is available for this cohort of learners.
4. The Department for Education issues guidance to local authorities in preparing their Post 16 Transport Policy and Policy Statement. Guidance for the 2011/12 and 2012/13 academic years is awaited, therefore the guidance issued for 2010/11 is used throughout the proposals.
5. A Post 16 Transport Policy Statement for the 2011/12 Academic Year must be in place by 31st May 2012. The Policy statement must include the Post 16 Transport Policy and details of how students can access transport. In addition to providing suitable notice a commitment has been made to seek to give providers a full academic year notice of any change. Hence, the consultation commenced May 2011. The decision on any change of policy will be made as soon as possible in order to advise parents and young people as soon as possible after the start of the academic year 2011 for implementation in 2012.
6. As part of Central Bedfordshire Council's overall aim to make the most effective use of resources available and to ensure they are targeted where they are needed most, a review of the current scheme of subsidised transport for 16-19 students has been undertaken.
7. This report sets out proposed changes to the policy and the consultation process taking place between 9 May 2011 and 24 June 2011. This relates to the option in Appendix A, if amended according to paragraphs 14 – 18 of this report. However, as indicated above, the Committee may recommend other options be considered.
8. Any change to the policy should be done in a timely way to ensure that young people and their parents/carers are aware of the eligibility criteria that will apply to them when they consider post 16 education options for the 2012/13 academic year.

Current policy

9. The current Post 16 Transport Policy meets the standards within the Department for Education guidance issued in June 2010.
10. To be eligible for subsidised transport students must :
 - a) be enrolled on a full time course
 - b) be 16 years of age or over and under 19 years of age at 1 September of the relevant academic year
 - c) be attending the nearest school or college to their home address which offers the qualification they are studying for, irrespective of the module content. This may be in Central Bedfordshire or a neighbouring council
 - d) Live more than 3 miles from their place of study, measured by the shortest available walking route. The distance may be less than 3 miles if a student has a medical condition which prevents them from walking to school or college, or the need for transport on road safety grounds can be justified based on the Council's Home to School Transport Policy.
11. The cost of the subsidised scheme for students, for the academic year 2010/11 is £133.95 per term or £364.25 per student for an annual pass. Some students, whose families are in receipt of certain benefits, are entitled to free transport.
12. All students with a statement of special educational need and in receipt of free home to school transport in Year 11 because of their special needs are provided with transport free of charge, irrespective of the distance between home and school or college. This includes all children who attend a special school or specialist provision in a mainstream school in Year 11. When a student leaves a local authority maintained school to attend a Further Education institution, their statement ends and they will be assessed under the statutory duties stated in the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009). Where a student remains in education, free transport is provided up to the age of 25.

The changes that were effective following the Executive decision in March 2011 for the 2011/12 Policy

13. To be eligible for free or subsidised transport students must:
 - a) be enrolled on a full time course
 - b) be 16 years of age or over and under 19 years of age at 1 September of the relevant academic year
 - c) live more than 3 miles and no more than 20 miles from the school or college they are attending
 - d) attend a school or college where they have been enrolled for a minimum of two years and been eligible for free transport or

- e) attend the nearest establishment which offers a qualification(s) at the same level and in the same subject area(s) as the course applied for and accepted on to
- f) have specific medical needs that prohibit them from accessing school or college unless transport is provided
- g) Be a looked after child where the Council is the Corporate Parent
- h) Have transport needs specifically highlighted in their statutory annual assessment of special educational needs

The cost of the subsidised scheme for students for the academic year 2011/12 is £144.00 per term or £391 for an annual pass. Some students whose families are in receipt of certain benefits are entitled to free transport.

Proposals to be considered for a further revision of the policy

- 14. As part of Central Bedfordshire Council's overall aim to make the most effective use of resources available and to ensure they are targeted where they are needed most, a review of entitlement to transport and of the associated costs of providing Post 16 transport has been undertaken.
- 15. The draft proposed policy at Appendix A, if amended according to paragraphs 14 – 18 of this report proposes that the eligibility criteria for the 2012/13 Post 16 Transport Policy focus on the most vulnerable groups of students. It is therefore proposed that transport will not be provided on grounds of distance or course content. However, as indicated above, the Committee may recommend other options be considered.
- 16. The proposed eligibility criteria relate to specific areas of:
 - low income;
 - medical grounds;
 - children for whom Central Bedfordshire Council is a Corporate Parent;
 - special educational needs.
- 17. It is proposed that the current eligibility criteria remain as agreed for the 2011/12 policy. These criteria focus on providing transport to vulnerable groups and are detailed below.

a) Low Income Criteria

For a student to be eligible for free transport on low income grounds their family must be in receipt of benefits set out in Appendix A and will:

- attend the school where they have been enrolled for a minimum of two years and have been eligible for free home to school transport, or

- live more than 3 miles, but no more than 20 miles and attend the nearest establishment which offers a qualification at the same level and in the same subject area(s) as the course applied for and accepted on to.

b) Medical needs

Where a student attends the nearest school or college offering the qualification and subject they are studying, transport can be considered on medical grounds irrespective of distance between home and school. Each application is considered on an individual basis. An application for transport must be supported in writing by a GP or medical consultant.

Transport will be arranged in the most cost effective way and be provided for a maximum of one term at a time.

A subsidised charge will be made for the transport provided, based on the number of weeks for which transport is agreed.

c) Children for whom Central Bedfordshire Council is a corporate parent

As Corporate Parents to these children, Central Bedfordshire Council will ensure that free transport will be provided for students to attend the most suitable establishment to meet their individual needs, irrespective of distance.

d) Special Educational Needs

Transport needs for students with special educational needs will be assessed as part of the statutory assessment process.

Where students have been assessed as requiring transport and are eligible, the subsidised rate will be charged, as set by the Executive of the Council and reviewed annually.

Subsidised transport will be provided for a student to the most appropriate establishment as identified through the assessment, where the distance between home and the establishment is more than 3 miles.

Where the distance is less than 3 miles the assessment will include consideration of whether a student could reasonably be expected to walk or cycle to school or college. Where this is not possible subsidised transport will be provided.

The most appropriate mode of travel will be agreed as part of the assessment process.

Appeals

18. Appeals from young people or parents will be managed through the Council Complaints process.

Consultation Process and findings

19. The Consultation on Appendix A as amended by paragraphs 14 – 18 of this report ran from 9 May 2011 until 24 June 2011.
20. A consultation questionnaire and guidance notes were sent to all Central Bedfordshire schools to be distributed to Year 10 students and those currently in the sixth form. The papers were also sent to transport and 14-19 lead officers of neighbouring Local Authorities, local colleges and work based learning providers and voluntary and community sector organisations.
21. As the consultation does not close until 24 June, the outcomes of the consultation will be circulated at the meeting and will be incorporated in the presentation by the Executive Member and Director.

Conclusion and Next Steps

22. **That the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers and comments on the proposed changes to the Post 16 Transport Policy as set out at Appendix A as amended by paragraphs 14 – 18 of this report, alongside any other options they consider should be developed. These alternative proposals may arise from discussion following the presentation by the Executive Member and Director. The Executive will then consider the next steps at their meeting in August 2011.**

Appendices:

Appendix A: Central Bedfordshire Council Post 16 Transport Policy 2011/12

Appendix B: Financial Information

Central Bedfordshire Council
www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

**Central
Bedfordshire**

Children's Services

Post 16 Transport Policy

Academic Year 2012/13



Post 16 Transport Policy

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Introduction

1. The responsibility of a local authority to prepare and publish an annual Transport Policy Statement is included in the Education Act 1996.
2. The Policy must set out the arrangements for the provision of transport, or otherwise, that the authority considers necessary, to enable young people age 16 – 18 to attend education or training.
3. For the purpose of this Policy, 16-18 means young people aged 16-18 who are starting a programme at school, college or work based learning provider before their 19th birthday.
4. The overall intention of the 16 – 18 transport duty is to:
 - ensure that learners of aged 16 - 18 are able to access the education and training of their choice; and
 - ensure that, if support for access to education is required, this will be assessed and provided where necessary.

Principles

5. Central Bedfordshire Council aims to provide safe, efficient and cost effective transport for students entitled to transport, in accordance with its duties and powers as described in legislation.
6. In meeting its statutory responsibility Central Bedfordshire Council will provide transport in accordance with agreed eligibility criteria which it will review annually.
7. The Council is committed to equality of opportunity and access to services and facilities and as such has undertaken an Equalities Impact Assessment of this Policy.
8. Information will be made available for parents, carers and students so that they are aware of the eligibility criteria and process for applying for transport.
9. Parents, carers and students are required to agree to a Code of Conduct when students are travelling on transport provided by the Council.
10. Eligibility for transport will be reviewed termly (before the start of each new term) to ensure that those students who are receiving transport remain eligible.
11. Take-up of transport will be monitored to ensure that access is fair and equitable and that hard to reach groups and those who are most vulnerable are aware of their entitlement.
12. Information relating to applications for transport will be held on a database for monitoring purposes and numerical information may be shared as requested with Central Government. Fair processing notices will be given to all applicants to ensure that they are aware of the purpose of the storage of their personal details.
13. Central Bedfordshire Council is committed to supporting sustainable modes of travel to school and college. Walking and cycling helps to reduce the congestion caused by the journey to school, together with the associated accidents and pollution and carbon emissions. If walking or cycling is not an option, school contract buses, public transport and car-sharing are more sustainable alternatives to individual car journeys.
14. The eligibility criteria set out in the Policy will be used for students starting a new course in the academic year 2012/13. Students entering the second or third year

of a course will be assessed using the same eligibility criteria against which their original application was assessed.

15. The timescale for arranging transport will be a maximum of 15 working days from receipt of the application.
16. This policy and the eligibility criteria will be kept under review and will be formally reviewed one year after implementation and thereafter every 3 years.

Legislation and Guidance

17. Through the Education Act 1996 and the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009) a local authority has a statutory responsibility to consider how it will assist learners to access the appropriate post 16 provision.
18. Through the Education and Skills Act 2008, from 2013 the age of participation will be raised so that young people will be required to stay in education or training until they are 17 and from 2015 until their 18th birthday.
19. A Post 16 Transport Policy Statement must be in place by 31st May each year. The Department for Education issues Post 16 Transport Guidance to support the preparation of a policy statement.
20. The policy links to the Council's Sustainable Transport Strategy and is similar in its principles to the Home to School Transport Policy.

Eligibility for Transport

21. This Policy sets out the eligibility criteria for transport for students aged 16 – 18 to ensure that those most in need of support receive it and those who are able to pay the cost of their transport do so.
22. The Executive of the Council sets its fees and charging policy rates annually and where students are eligible for subsidised transport, charges are made as set and published within the Fees and Charging Policy.

Eligibility Criteria

23. The eligibility criteria relate to specific areas of:
 - ◆ low income;
 - ◆ medical grounds;
 - ◆ children for whom Central Bedfordshire Council is a Corporate Parent;
 - ◆ special educational needs.

Subsidised transport for families with a low income

24. Central Bedfordshire Council is committed to working to assist low income families:
25. For a student to be eligible for free transport on low income grounds their family must be in receipt of benefits set out in Appendix A and will:

- attend the school where they have been enrolled for a minimum of two years and have been eligible for free home to school transport, or
- live more than 3 miles, but no more than 20 miles and attend the nearest establishment which offers a qualification at the same level and in the same subject area(s) as the course applied for and accepted on to.

Transport on grounds of medical needs

26. Where a student attends the nearest school or college offering the qualification and subject they are studying for, transport can be considered on medical grounds irrespective of distance between home and school. Each application is considered on an individual basis. An application for transport must be supported in writing by a GP or medical consultant.
27. Transport will be arranged in the most cost effective way and be provided for a maximum of one term at a time.
28. A subsidised charge based on a termly rate as set out in the Council's Fees and Charges Policy, will be made for the transport provided. The charge will be determined at a pro rata rate for the number of weeks for which transport is agreed.

Transport for children for whom Central Bedfordshire Council is a Corporate Parent

29. Whilst representing only a very small number of the total 16 – 18 age population, Looked After Children (including Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children) can be some of the most vulnerable students in need of support. The most suitable establishment to meet these particular students' needs will not always be the nearest school or college to their home address.
30. As Corporate Parents to these children, Central Bedfordshire Council will ensure that free transport will be provided for students to attend the most suitable establishment to meet their individual needs, irrespective of distance.

Transport for students with Special Educational Needs

31. Transport needs for students with special educational needs will be assessed as part of the statutory assessment process, either the Statement of Special Educational Needs or the Learning for Living and Work Assessment.
32. Where students have been assessed as requiring transport and are eligible, a subsidised rate will be charged, as set out in the Fees and Charges Policy of the Council and reviewed annually.
33. Subsidised transport will be provided for a student to the establishment identified through the assessment, where the distance between home and the establishment is more than 3 miles.
34. Where the distance is less than 3 miles the assessment will include consideration of whether a student could reasonably be expected to walk or cycle to school or college. Where this is not possible subsidised transport will be provided.
35. The most appropriate mode of travel will be agreed as part of the assessment process.

36. The assessment will consider transport to the nearest suitable school or college. If by parental or student preference a more distant establishment is named, transport will be the responsibility of the parent.
37. A travel training programme to support those students who are physically able to walk, to travel more independently and to support transition to adult life will be introduced.
38. Where a student with Special Education Needs remains in further education, transport could be provided up to the age of 25, if specifically required through the annual statutory assessment process; either the Statement of Special Educational Needs or the Learning for Living and Work Assessment.
39. On all routes the responsibility for the introduction of escorts on a temporary or permanent basis is delegated to officers.

Additional considerations

40. Students who live in a joint home arrangement, who fulfil the other criteria for free or subsidised transport, will be provided with transport from the primary home address registered with the school or college.
41. Students may be required to walk up to one mile from home to the pickup point and where allocated a place on a public service route, they may be required to walk up to one mile from the setting-down point to the school.
42. In determining entitlement to free or subsidised transport, the route used in assessing the distance will be the shortest available walking route up to 3 miles and the shortest motorised route up to 20 miles. Measurement will commence at the gate of the student's home to the nearest gate on the school or college site.
43. Where students receive free or subsidised transport as a result of errors in measurement, the transport will be withdrawn at the end of the term during which the error is discovered. The student and their family will be notified of any changes as soon as possible after the error has been identified.
44. Smoking is prohibited on all Council owned vehicles when used for the transportation of students and is a condition of hire of contractors' vehicles, including Taxis.

Concessionary Places on School Contract Vehicles

45. Where students are not entitled to free or subsidised transport, it may be possible to purchase a concessionary pass for routes operating on a school contract vehicle. There is where the Council has a direct contract with a bus operator and where there are spare seats once all entitled students have been allocated a seat.
46. Concessionary Passes can be bought for one term at a time and are allocated on a first come, first served basis.
47. Concessionary passes are not available on routes that are public registered services, where it is possible to pay a bus operator direct. Information on public transport routes is available through www.traveline.info

Rail/Bus passes and mileage reimbursements

48. Passes for public service routes are issued to students, based on the most cost effective provision of transport.
49. Where there is no public transport or where it is not practical to re-route an existing contracted vehicle, parents/carers or students may be able to claim mileage allowances for transport to and from school or college. However, this is at the Council's discretion and is based upon the most cost effective provision of transport. The subsidised rate is payable by students to whom mileage expenses are paid.

Replacement Bus Passes

50. Students are required to carry a bus pass on all occasions that they travel. Where a bus pass is lost a replacement must be obtained.
51. A handling charge will be made for a new pass to be issued as set out in the Council's Fees and Charges Policy. In addition the cost of a new pass provided by a bus company will be passed on to a student. Information on the cost of replacement bus passes will be provided when the original pass is issued.

Appeals

52. Where a parent, carer or student wishes to appeal a decision not to provide subsidised transport based on the appropriateness of course content, the 14 – 19 Strategy Group, a statutory group set up under Education and Skills Act 2008 section 85, will provide an independent view regarding the reasonableness of the choice made by the young person.
53. Appeals for any other reason will be managed through the Council complaints process.

Implementation and Monitoring of the policy

54. The Director of Children's Services will be responsible for the implementation of this policy through the development of internal processes that will ensure the ability to monitor take up of service and regular reviews for those in receipt of the service.

Appendix A: Free transport for families with a low income

1. Children from low income groups are defined in the Education and Inspections Act (2006) as those whose families are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit (WTC) or who are entitled to free school meals
2. Once a student has been assessed as being eligible for transport it will be provided free if the following criteria are met:

Maximum Working Tax Credit (WTC)

3. When a customer is first awarded tax credits, or following a change in their household circumstances, HM Revenue and Customs issue a “tax credits award notice” detailing the breakdown and amount of the award. Part two of the award notice gives details of “How we work out your tax credits” including details of the full WTC elements. This is the maximum amount a customer can receive in WTC in any year. It then lists “any reduction due to your income” and shows the net amount payable. It is therefore readily apparent from the award notice whether a person is receiving maximum WTC or a reduced sum due to income.

1

Benefit	Documentation required
Income Support (IS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter confirming receipt of benefit • Current GIRO payment which states ‘Inc. Supp.’ or similar abbreviation
Income Based Jobseekers Allowance (IBJSA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter confirming receipt of benefit • Current GIRO payment which states ‘Inc. Supp.’ or similar abbreviation
Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (from the National Asylum Support Service)	Letter of confirmation from the National Asylum Support Service (NASS)
Guaranteed element of State Pension Credit	Pension Credit M1000 Award Notice
Child Tax Credit, provided a parent /carer is not entitled to Working Tax Credit and has an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue and Customs) that does not exceed £16,190	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TC602 Tax Award Credit Notice – issued by HM Revenue and Customs • Letter from the local Revenues and Customs Office confirming tax credit details

¹ It is the Government’s intention to create a ‘universal benefit’ and remove all other benefits. At the point of implementation of any such legislation, this appendix and the associated criteria will be revised.

Appendix B: Additional guidance on Subsidised Transport for Students with Special Educational Needs

Parental responsibilities

In all cases where free or subsidised transport is provided, parents/carers must make their own arrangements for the student to arrive at and be collected from the vehicle.

Parents/carers will be asked to allow the Council to use any specialist seating which the student requires. If this is not possible the Council will arrange for suitable seating to be provided.

If parents/carers choose to transport the student themselves when a place is available on existing transport arranged by the Council, then no mileage reimbursement will be payable by the Council.

Provision of transport for students with Special Educational Needs

The Council will endeavour to transport students in the shortest possible time and will investigate all possible alternatives if the travel time, one way, exceeds one hour and fifteen minutes. Where possible, adjustments will be made to transport arrangements to reduce travel time to less than one hour and fifteen minutes provided this can be achieved without a significant increase in transport costs.

The timescale for arranging transport will be a maximum of 15 working days from receipt of the application. Where a change in transport arrangements is requested at least one week's notice must be given.

Residential placements

Where a student attends a residential school or college, free or subsidised transport will be provided in accordance with the accommodation arrangements:

- a) Termly boarding
 - b) 12 day boarding
 - c) Weekly boarding
 - d) 52 week placement
- **termly boarding** – free or subsidised transport will be provided at the beginning and end of each term and at the beginning and end of the mid term holiday.
 - **12 day boarding** – free or subsidised transport will be provided on alternate weekends and at the beginning and end of each term.
 - **weekly boarding** – free or subsidised transport will be provided on Monday and Friday each week.
 - **52 week placement** – free or subsidised transport will be provided for three return journeys per year.
 - Any additional journeys will be the responsibility of the parent/carer.
 - In the interests of the efficient use of resources the council will, in all cases, encourage parents/carers to transport students for which mileage reimbursement will be made.

- The cost of parent/carers attending one review per year at a school or college outside of the Central Bedfordshire area will be met by mileage reimbursement or by the provision of a travel warrant. No other additional costs (e.g. other members of the family, friends etc.) will be met by the Council.
- One parent/carer may be transported with the student to act as an escort to out-county school or college where it results in the efficient use of the Council's resources.
- Any additional transport requirements to those set out above will remain the responsibility of the parent/carer.

Contact us...

Për Informacion

Per Informazione

Za Informacije

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برای اطلاع

المعلومات

معلومات کے لئی

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Za Informacja

by telephone: 0300 300 8000

by email: customer.services@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

on the web: www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Write to Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House,
Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford, Bedfordshire SG17 5TQ

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POST 16 TRANSPORT

Appendix B

Post 16 Transport Costs Financial Year 2010/11	2010/11					
	Learners receiving subsidised transport	Learners with free transport	Total Learners accessing transport	Average cost per learner	Average Parental Contribution	Average Cost to Council
Mainstream - School	355	127	482	£709	£291	£418
Mainstream - College	279	228	507	£816	£323	£493
Special Educational Needs (SEN)	0	156	156	£6,684	£0	£6,684
Total	634	511	1,145	£2,736	£305	£2,431

Savings from proposals for 2011/12 policy	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Mileage criteria	£27,559	£75,458	£72,178
New Low income criteria	£88,040	£186,300	£178,200
Medical Needs	£0	£0	£0
Removal of road safety assessment	£10,214	£27,968	£26,752
SEN - intro of 3 miles and parental contribution	£15,120	£49,680	£47,520
Total	£120,933	£339,406	£324,650

Notes

The 2011/12 policy was approved by Executive 15 March 2011 to be implemented from Sept 2011
Parental contribution for 2010/11 was set at £134 per school term or £364 for an annual pass
Parental contribution is not always received for 3 terms, as students attend fewer lessons during the summer

Additional savings from proposed policy	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
Option A			
Focus on vulnerable students only			
No subsidised transport costs - School		£88,093	£251,695
No subsidised transport costs - College		£79,673	£227,636
No parental contribution		-£67,688	-£193,395
Reduction of administrative staff costs		-£5,586	-£9,576
Total further savings		£94,492	£276,360

Assumptions used in Proposals

The new policy would only apply to students starting new courses - 60% of the Post 16 cohort
Student numbers increase by 4% per year in line with the Raise of the Participation Age
2012/13 illustrated as 7 months as the policy will be implemented in the academic year (Sept 2012)
Travel patterns remain the same - i.e. learners from the same wards access the same institutions
Levels of vulnerable groups would stay the same
Savings are based against the full year 2010/11 cost
Reduction of staff costs based upon loss of 0.5 FTE from Sept 2012 (Mid admin grade)
Savings illustrated do not take account of any re-tendering exercises that will take place during the next 2 years

Total savings (both policies together)	£120,933	£433,898	£601,010
Option B			
2011/12 policy retained			
No changes	£120,933	£339,406	£324,650
Difference between Option A and Option B	£0	-£94,492	-£276,360

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Meeting: Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Date: 28 June 2011
Subject: Work Programme 2011 – 2012 & Executive Forward Plan
Report of: Chief Executive
Summary: The report provides Members with details of the currently drafted Committee work programme and the latest Executive Forward Plan.

Contact Officer: Bernard Carter, Overview & Scrutiny Manager
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The work programme of the Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee will contribute indirectly to all 5 Council priorities.

Financial:

n/a

Legal:

n/a

Risk Management:

n/a

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

n/a

Equalities/Human Rights:

n/a

Community Safety:

n/a

Sustainability:

n/a

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. **that the Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee**
 - (a) **considers and approves the work programme attached, subject to any further amendments it may wish to make;**
 - (b) **considers the Executive Forward Plan; and**
 - (c) **considers whether it wishes to add any further items to the work programme and/or establish any Task Forces to assist it in reviewing specific items.**

Work Programme

1. Attached at Appendix A is the currently drafted work programme for the Committee.
2. Also attached at Appendix B is the latest version of the Executive's Forward Plan so that Overview & Scrutiny Members are fully aware of the key issues Executive Members will be taking decisions upon in the coming months. Those items relating specifically to this Committee's terms of reference are shaded in light grey.
3. The Committee is now requested to consider the work programme attached and amend or add to it as necessary. This will allow officers to plan accordingly but will not preclude further items being added during the course of the year if Members so wish and capacity exists.

Task Forces

4. In addition to consideration of the work programme, Members may also wish to consider how each item will be reviewed i.e. by the Committee itself (over one or a number of Committee meetings) or by establishing a Member Task Force to review an item in greater depth and report back its findings.

Conclusion

5. Members are requested to consider and agree the attached work programme, subject to any further amendments/additions they may wish to make and highlight those items within it where they may wish to establish a Task Force to assist the Committee in its work.

Appendices:

Appendix A: Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2011 – 12

Appendix B: The Executive Forward Plan for the period June 2011 to May 2012

Work Programme for Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2011 - 2012

Ref	Indicative OSC Meeting Date	Report Title	Issue to be considered	Comment
1.	28 June 2011	Children's Trust Annual Report Corporate Parenting Annual Report Post 16 Transport Consultation	To receive and consider the annual report from the Children's Trust To receive and consider the annual report from the Corporate Parenting Panel To consider the results of a consultation exercise regarding Post 16 Transport	Consider inviting Panel to OSC
2.	26 July 2011	Quarter 4 Performance Monitoring Foster Carer Allowances Leaving Care Allowance	To consider performance monitoring information for the last quarter of 2010/11 To consider an options paper regarding foster carer allowances To consider an options paper regarding leaving care allowance	
3.	6 September 2011	Disability Homes	To consider a review of disability homes	

Ref	Indicative OSC Meeting Date	Report Title	Issue to be considered	Comment
		Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report	To receive and consider the annual report from the Local Safeguarding Children Board	Consider inviting new Chair of LSCB
		Fostering, Adoption & Private Fostering	To receive and consider annual reports for Fostering, Adoption & Private Fostering	
4.	18 October 2011	Quarter 1 Budget Monitoring	To consider the directorate's budget monitoring information for the first quarter of 2010/11.	
		Quarter 1 Performance Monitoring	To consider performance monitoring information for the first quarter of 2011/12	
5.	29 November 2011			
6.	20 December 2011	Children & Young People's Plan	To consider the half year monitoring report of the Children & Young People's Plan	
7.	17 January 2012	Quarter 2 Budget Monitoring	To consider the directorate's budget monitoring information for the second quarter of 2010/11.	

Ref	Indicative OSC Meeting Date	Report Title	Issue to be considered	Comment
		Quarter 2 Performance Monitoring	To consider performance monitoring information for the second quarter of 20011/12	
		Children's Health	To receive a presentation regarding children's health	
8.	28 February 2012			
9.	17 April 2012	Quarter 3 Budget Monitoring	To consider the directorate's budget monitoring information for the third quarter of 2010/11.	
		Quarter 3 Performance Monitoring	To consider performance monitoring information for the third quarter of 20011/12	
10.	22 May 2012			
Other Items to be Considered – Date to be Determined				
		Education Bill/Act	To receive a presentation regarding the Education Bill/Act	

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**Central Bedfordshire Council
Forward Plan of Key Decisions
1 June 2011 to 31 May 2012**

- 1) During the period from **1 June 2011 to 31 May 2012**, Central Bedfordshire Council plans to make key decisions on the issues set out below. “Key decisions” relate to those decisions of the Executive which are likely:
 - to result in the incurring of expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant (namely £200,000 or above per annum) having regard to the budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
 - to be significant in terms of their effects on communities living or working in an area comprising one or more wards in the area of Central Bedfordshire.

- 2) The Forward Plan is a general guide to the key decisions to be determined by the Executive and will be updated on a monthly basis. Key decisions will be taken by the Executive as a whole. The Members of the Executive are:

Executive Member

To be appointed at the Council’s AGM on 19 May 2011

- 3) Those items identified for decision more than one month in advance may change in forthcoming Plans. Each new Plan supersedes the previous Plan. Any person who wishes to make representations to the Executive about the matter in respect of which the decision is to be made should do so to the officer whose telephone number and e-mail address are shown in the Forward Plan. Any correspondence should be sent to the contact officer at the relevant address as shown below. General questions about the Plan such as specific dates, should be addressed to the Head of Democratic Services, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ.
- 4) The agendas for meetings of the Executive will be published as follows:

Meeting Date	Publication of Agenda
15 March 2011	03 March 2011
05 April 2011	24 March 2011
31 May 2011	19 May 2011
12 July 2011	30 June 2011
23 August 2011	11 August 2011
4 October 2011	22 September 2011
15 November 2011	3 November 2011
6 December 2011	24 November 2011
10 January 2012	22 December 2011
14 February 2012	2 February 2012
27 March 2012	15 March 2012
15 May 2012	3 May 2012

Central Bedfordshire Council

Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1 June 2011 to 31 May 2012

Key Decisions

Date of Publication: 13.05.11

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
1.	Local Economic Plan -	To approve the Central Bedfordshire Local Economic Plan.	12 July 2011		Draft final Local Economic Plan	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning & Economic Development Comments by 11/06/11 to Contact Officer: James Cushing, Head of Economic Policy Email james.cushing@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4984
2.	Biggleswade Town Centre Strategy and Masterplan -	To consider and formally adopt the Biggleswade town centre strategy and masterplan as a supplementary planning document.	12 July 2011	Non statutory consultation – July 2009 comprising public exhibition Non statutory consultation – 3 July to 27 August 2010, 4 public exhibitions in addition to web and print consultation methods Formal statutory consultation – Early November 2010 for a period of four to six weeks	Biggleswade town centre strategy and masterplan	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning & Economic Development Comments by 11/06/11 to Contact Officer: Liz Wade, Assistant Director Economic Growth and Regeneration Email: liz.wade@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6288

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
3.	Award of Contract: 24/7 Community Alarm and Emergency out of hours telephone call handling service -	To award the contract.	12 July 2011		Tender report	Executive Member for Social Care, Health & Housing Comments by 11/06/11 to Contact Officer: Basil Quinn, Housing Asset Manager Performance Email: basil.quinn@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5118
4.	Post 16 Transport Policy -	To approve the draft policy to be implemented from September 2012.	12 July 2011	Consultation to run between 9 May 2011 and 24 June 2011. Workshops to be held with schools, colleges, neighbouring authorities and Youth Parliament.	Report Consultation forms and feedback Draft policy Equality Impact Assessment	Executive Member for Children's Services Comments by 11/06/11 to Contact Officer: Sylvia Gibson, Interim Assistant Director, Learning and Strategic Commissioning or Ben Pearson, Head of Joint Strategic Commissioning Email: sylvia.gibson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5522 or ben.pearson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5679

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
5.	Business Case for Integrated Children's System Improvement -	To consider the business case for the procurement of a replacement Integrated Children's System and improvement of related processes and workflows.	12 July 2011		Report	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 11/06/11 to Contact Officer: Clive Jones, Assistant Director Customer and Systems Email: clive.jones@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4168
6.	Consultation on Central Bedfordshire's draft Approach to Parking Management -	To consider the consultation on Central Bedfordshire's draft Approach to Parking Management.	12 July 2011	Members and Town and Parish Councils Exhibitions at Priory and Watling House Tuesday 6 June 2011	Draft Approach to Parking Management	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities Services Comments by 11/06/11 to Contact Officer: Basil Jackson, Assistant Director Highways & Transport Email: basil.jackson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6171
7.	Budget Management - Provisional Outturn 2010/11 -	To provide information on the budget outturn as at 31 March 2011.	12 July 2011		Report	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 11/06/11 to Contact Officer: John Unsworth, Interim Assistant Director of Finance Email: john.unsworth@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
8.	Community Engagement Strategy -	To endorse the refresh of the Community Engagement Strategy.	23 August 2011		Report	Leader of the Council Comments by 22/07/11 to Contact Officer: Ian Porter, Assistant Director Policy, Partnerships & Performance Email: ian.porter@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6529
9.	Transforming learning and our relationship with schools - Review of school places in Leighton & Linslade -	To consider the responses to the consultation on the preferred option(s) and to authorise the publication of statutory notices.	4 October 2011		Education Vision, Children and Young People's Plan, Learning Transformation Dunstable and Houghton Regis Review Protocol	Executive Member for Children's Services Comments by 03/09/11 to Contact Officer: Sylvia Gibson, Interim Assistant Director, Learning and Strategic Commissioning Email: sylvia.gibson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5598
10.	Budget Management Report - Quarter 1 -	To consider the quarter 1 budget management report.	4 October 2011		Report	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 03/09/11 to Contact Officer: John Unsworth, Interim Assistant Director of Finance Email: john.unsworth@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
11.	Transforming learning and our relationship with schools - Review of school places in Leighton & Linslade -	To approve the statutory proposals and financial commitment to implement the chosen option.	15 November 2011		Education Vision, Children and Young People's Plan, Learning Transformation Dunstable and Houghton Regis Review Protocol	Executive Member for Children's Services Comments by 15/10/11 to Contact Officer: Sylvia Gibson, Interim Assistant Director, Learning and Strategic Commissioning Email: sylvia.gibson@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5598
12.	Central Bedfordshire Approach to all Age Skills -	To approve Central Bedfordshire's approach to All Age Skills in order to: A: establish the priorities and actions requirement to ensure the skills challenges facing Central Bedfordshire can be met; and B: demonstrate the Council's commitment to demonstrate leadership in driving the skills agenda forward.	15 November 2011	Workshops and focus groups will be held throughout May/June with partners, stakeholders and individuals. From July – September the Council will be running a formal consultation for a minimum of 13 weeks.	Local Economic Assessment	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development Comments by 14/10/11 to Contact Officer: Kate McFarlane, Head of Community Regeneration & Adult Skills Email: kate.mcfarlane@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5858

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
13.	Budget Management Report - Quarter 2 -	To consider the quarter 2 budget management report.	6 December 2011		Report	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 05/11/11 John Unsworth, Interim Assistant Director of Finance Email: john.unsworth@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147
14.	Review of Central Bedfordshire Council Library Service -	Approval is sought to: A: agree the Central Bedfordshire vision for the Libraries Service; and B: agree a sustainable model of future Library Service provision.	6 December 2011	Throughout May/June a series of focus groups and workshops with service users and partners and stakeholders. From July – September/October a formal consultation for a minimum of 13 weeks on the vision and potential service delivery models.	Emerging vision, core service offer and aspiration Libraries Service Review Report Outcomes from consultation process Equality Impact Assessment	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities Services Comments by 05/11/11 Kate McFarlane, Head of Community Regeneration & Adult Skills Email: kate.mcfarlane@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5858

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
15.	Gypsy & Traveller DPD -	To recommend to Council the adoption of the Gypsy & Traveller DPD.	10 January 2012	Statutory LDF consultation process and Examination by Planning Inspector.	Gypsy & Traveller DPD (DLF North)	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities – Strategic Planning and Economic Development Comments by 09/12/11 to Contact Officer: Richard Fox, Head of Development Plan Email: richard.fox@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4105
16.	Award of the Housing Responsive Maintenance and Void Repairs Contract -	To award the housing responsive maintenance and void repairs contract.	10 January 2012		Report	Executive Member for Social Care, Health & Housing Comments by 09/12/11 to Contact Officer: Basil Quinn, Housing Asset Manager Performance Email: basil.quinn@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5118
17.	Community Safety Partnership Priorities and the Community Safety Partnership Plan for 2012-2013 -	To adopt the Community Safety Partnership Priorities and the Community Safety Partnership Plan for 2012-2013.	27 March 2012	Strategic Assessment & Partnership Plan will be considered at the Community Safety Partnership Executive meeting in November/December, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Local Strategic Partnership.	Strategic Assessment Priorities & Community Safety Partnership Plan 2012-2013	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities Services Comments by 26/02/12 to Contact Officer: Jeanette Keyte, Community Safety Manager Email: jeanette.keyte@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 5232

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
18.	Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2012-2013, Age Restricted Sales Plan 2012-2013 and the Health and Safety (as a Regulator) Service Plan 2012-2013 -	To approve the Food Law Enforcement Service Plan 2012-2013, Age Restricted Sales Plan 2012-2013 and the Health and Safety (as a Regulator) Service Plan 2012-2013.	27 March 2012		Central Bedfordshire Enforcement Policy; FSA Framework Agreement on Local Authority Food Law Enforcement; Food Law Code of Practice (England); HSE Section 18 Standard on Enforcement	Executive Member for Sustainable Communities Services Comments by 26/02/12 to Contact Officer: Susan Childerhouse, Head of Public Protection (North) Email: susan.childerhouse@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 4394
19.	Budget Management Report - Quarter 3 -	To consider the quarter 3 budget management report.	27 March 2012		Report	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 26/02/11 to Contact Officer: John Unsworth, Interim Assistant Director of Finance Email: john.unsworth@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6147

Ref No.	Issue for Key Decision by the Executive	Intended Decision	Indicative Meeting Date	Consultees and Date/Method	Documents which may be considered	Portfolio Holder and Contact officer (method of comment and closing date)
NON KEY DECISIONS						
20.	Quarter 4 Performance Report -	To highlight key Quarter 4 performance for Central Bedfordshire Council.	12 July 2011		None.	Executive Member for Corporate Resources Comments by 11/06/11 to Contact Officer: Ian Porter, Assistant Director Policy, Partnerships & Performance Email: ian.porter@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0300 300 6529

Postal address for Contact Officers: Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Monks Walk, Chicksands, Shefford SG17 5TQ

**Central Bedfordshire Council
Forward Plan of Decisions on Key Issues**

For the Municipal Year 2011/12 the Forward Plan will be published on the fifteenth day of each month or, where the fifteenth day is not a working day, the working day immediately proceeding the fifteenth day, or in February 2012 when the plan will be published on the fourteenth day:

Date of Publication	Period of Plan
15.04.11	1 May 2011 – 30 April 2012
13.05.11	1 June 2011 – 31 May 2012
15.06.11	1 July 2011 – 30 June 2012
15.07.11	1 August 2011 – 31 July 2012
15.08.11	1 September 2011 – 31 August 2012
15.09.11	1 October 2011 – 30 September 2012
14.10.11	1 November 2011 – 31 October 2012
15.11.11	1 December 2011 – 30 November 2012
15.12.11	1 January 2012 – 31 December 2012
13.01.12	1 February 2012 – 31 January 2013
14.02.12	1 March 2012 – 28 February 2013
15.03.12	1 April 2012 – 31 March 2013