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**Meeting:** Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny

**Date:** 20 January 2015

**Subject:** Refresh of the Children and Young People's Plan

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

**Summary:** This report sets out the approach being taken to refresh the Central Bedfordshire Children's Trust, Children and Young People's Plan (June 2013 – March 2015).

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Advising Officer: Sue Harrison, Director of Children's Services

Contact Officer: Karen Oellermann, Assistant Director Commissioning and Partnerships

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: All

Function of: Council

## CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

### Council Priorities:

1. Priorities within the current Children and Young People's Plan (June 2013 – March 2015) support the delivery of the following Council priorities:
  - Improved educational attainment
  - Promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable.

### Financial:

2. All priorities set out in the Plan will be delivered within partners' agreed financial resources. Working with partners to deliver services in a more integrated way, with a focus on prevention and early intervention, is a key driver of the Plan which also aims to deliver efficiencies.

### Legal:

3. The Children and Young People's Plan is a key mechanism to enable the Council and partners to demonstrate how they are meeting the 'duty to co-operate' under section 10 of the Children Act 2004.

The Act establishes the Local Authority as the lead and accountable partner in such arrangements. Each children's services authority in England must make arrangements to promote co-operation between:

- the authority
- each of the authority's relevant partners
- such other persons or bodies as the authority considers appropriate, being persons or bodies of any nature who exercise functions or are engaged in

activities in relation to children in the authority's area.

The arrangements are to be made with a view to improving the well-being of children in the authority's area relating to:

- physical and mental and emotional well-being
- protection from harm and neglect
- education, training and recreation
- the contribution made by them to society
- social and economic well-being.

**Risk Management:**

4. Risk management is embedded through the processes of delivery planning and quarterly performance monitoring.

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

5. There are no staffing implications directly linked to these proposals, however maintaining a skilled workforce to ensure the delivery of the plan is a key priority for the Council and its partners.

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

6. The Equality Impact Assessment was revisited as part of the development of the Children and Young People's Plan (June 2013 – March 2015). Equality issues were highlighted to inform the Plan which identifies children and young people who are not achieving, who are excluded or are in vulnerable circumstances.

**Public Health**

7. 'Being healthy and positive' is a priority in the current Children and Young People's Plan and this contributes to delivering key outcomes relevant to public health. The refresh of the Plan includes consideration of relevant Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy outcomes/priorities.

**Community Safety:**

8. The Council has a statutory duty under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to consider crime, disorder and community safety issues across all of its functions. Children and Young people can be particularly vulnerable in relation to crime as both victims and perpetrators. Taking action to improve children and young people's life outcome, as set out in the plan, reduces the risk of them becoming victims or perpetrators of crime and disorder.  
‘Protecting vulnerable children’ is a priority within the current Children and Young People's Plan which contributes to delivering safer communities.

**Sustainability:**

9. Not Applicable.

**Procurement:**

10. Not applicable.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

**The Committee is asked to:-**

1. **Note the approach being taken to refresh the Children and Young People's Plan (June 2013 – March 2015).**
2. **Provide comment on any further areas for partners to consider as part of the refresh.**

**Background**

11. The current Children and Young People's Plan (June 2013 – March 2015) is included as Appendix A.
12. It was agreed by the Children's Trust Board at its meeting on 23 May 2013 and endorsed by Central Bedfordshire Council Executive on 25 June 2013.
13. The development of the Plan was rigorous with the following used to inform its development:
  - Review of key documents such as the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, new inspection frameworks, inspection findings and national reviews of key policy areas.
  - Consideration of priorities and outcomes by Trust Board Delivery Groups.
  - Consultation with Headteachers and Governors on proposed outcomes.
  - Consideration of Youth Parliament survey findings.
  - Consultation with a focus group of young people.
  - Consultation with Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**Refresh of the Plan – Approach**

14. On 1st December 2014, Central Bedfordshire Children's Trust Board considered the approach to refreshing the current Plan concluding that only a light touch refresh was needed as the vision, priorities and outcomes remain appropriate. Actions and measures across the four priority areas are however being revisited with the following groups leading on their review:

**Priority: Improved Educational Attainment** – Head Teacher and Partners Reference Group.

**Priority: Protecting Vulnerable Children** – Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board.

**Priority: Early Help and Improving Life Chances** – Acting Early, Reducing Poverty and Improving Health Group.

**Priority: Being Healthy and Positive** – Acting Early, Reducing Poverty and Improving Health Group.

15. Consultation will take place with young people and youth parliament as part of the refresh.

16. Feedback will be presented within a refreshed Plan to the Children's Trust Board on 3rd March 2015, for agreement.
17. The refreshed Plan (once agreed) will cover a two year period.

### **Refresh of the Plan – Issues Identified**

18. The following issues have already been identified as areas for consideration as part of the refresh:
  - Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy – ensuring the alignment of actions to deliver the outcomes associated with 'Giving every child the best start in life' and 'Ensuring good mental health and wellbeing at every age'.
  - The need to tackle the issue of substance misuse and mental health alongside domestic abuse within the priority 'Protecting Vulnerable Children'.
  - Measures and actions associated with the improvement of performance in relation to children achieving a good level of development at the early years foundation stage and school readiness.
  - Measures and actions associated with improving self esteem – the results of the 2014 Central Bedfordshire Health Related Behaviour and Perceptions Survey indicate an increase in low self-esteem in pupils in Year 6, 8 & 10 who participated in the survey.
19. The latest Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Executive Summary (September 2014) highlights key issues from the main JSNA and the following implications for commissioning will be considered through this process:

'Starting and Developing Well' – implications for commissioning:

- Ensuring early intervention and prevention to tackle the underlying risk factors for infant mortality. Outcomes for maternal obesity, smoking in pregnancy and breastfeeding all need to be improved through targeted interventions and services.
- Ensuring that the Maternal Obesity programme recently launched at the Luton and Dunstable Hospital is offered to all pregnant women who have a BMI of 30+.
- Improving educational attainment with a focus on early years foundation stage, key stages 4 (GCSE) and 5 (A levels) and addressing the issues leading to pupil absences.
- Improving the achievement of vulnerable and disadvantaged children especially those in receipt of Free School Meals and Looked After Children.
- Responding to the placement needs of current and future children in care and care leavers - in line with the Central Bedfordshire Council Sufficiency Strategy.
- Increasing effective multi-agency, integrated working and delivery between health, local authorities and schools to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people, (for example the current exercise to recommission mental health services).

- Ensuring the early identification of poor maternal mental health, helping children become more resilient and increasing identification of children who are at risk of poor mental health early and ensuring that they have access to appropriate services. There is a significant link between children and young people's mental health and parental alcohol or substance misuse; therefore services must be effective in supporting families affected by these issues.
- Ensuring that domestic abuse in families with children and young people is identified as early as possible and improving support to the whole family to reduce repeat incidents and their impact on children and young people.
- Tackling child sexual abuse by ensuring all agencies working with children and young people are aware of risk factors, signs of abuse and exploitation and what to do if they suspect that it is taking place.
- Ensuring that children are supported to make healthy lifestyle choices and reduce risky behaviours such as smoking, drug and alcohol abuse and early or unsafe sexual activity. This should include the provision of high quality PHSE teaching in schools, a comprehensive 5-19 Healthy Child Programme, delivery of early intervention programmes such as 'Kick Ash' and 'Aspire' and the provision of appropriate drug and alcohol services for children and young people.
- Provision of high quality and consistent training programmes for professionals working with young people on reducing risky behaviours, developing social and emotional behaviour and promotion of appropriate local services.

20. Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting of 16 September 2014 considered the Children's Trust Annual Report 2013/14 – which set out progress against the current Plan. Comments were made with regard to the performance of a number of measures which included:

- The number of disadvantaged 2 year olds placed in early education/child care.
- GCSE attainment.
- Cases where children became subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time where domestic violence was a factor.
- Mothers smoking at time of delivery (south Central Bedfordshire).
- Supporting Families Programme.

These comments will be revisited in the context of the refresh.

## **Consultation and Next Steps**

21. The Children and Young People's Plan sets out a shared vision for children, young people and their families detailing ways in which outcomes will be achieved.

22. Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the approach being taken to the refresh and provide comment on any further areas for partners and key delivery groups to consider in respect of this.

**Appendices:**

Appendix A - Children and Young People's Plan June 2013 – March 2015

**Background papers and their location:** (open to public inspection)

- Executive report (25 June 2013) 'Children and Young People's Plan 2013-2015' available on the Central Bedfordshire Council website.
- Central Bedfordshire Children's Trust Board report (23 May 2013) 'Agreeing the Children and Young People's Plan 2013-15' available on the Central Bedfordshire Children's Trust website.