

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2005/2006 REPORT NO. 143

MEETING TITLE AND DATE:

Cabinet, Wednesday, 1st November 2006

REPORT OF:

Director of Education, Children's Services and Leisure

Contact officers and telephone number:

Jennifer Hill ext 4910

Tony Theodoulou ext 4610

Email: Jennifer.Hill@enfield.gov.uk

Tony.Theodoulou@enfield.gov.uk

Agenda – Part:1

Item: 8

Subject: Integrated Commissioning Strategy for Children's Services

Wards: All

**Cabinet Member consulted:
Councillor Glynis Vince**

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents an Integrated Commissioning Strategy for Children's Services for the Cabinet's consideration and approval.

The Integrated Strategy provides a framework for the Council and Primary Care Trust (PCT) to agree jointly commissioning intentions and priorities for the next 3 years whilst allowing both organisations to retain responsibility for their own commissioning of services.

The Strategy was adopted by the Children's Board at their meeting in July. The PCT Board will also consider it at a future date.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet are asked to consider any amendments to the attached Strategy and to recommend its adoption.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board's (CYPSPB) Change for Children Programme Plan includes an objective 'to ensure that effective commissioning arrangements are developed, including supporting infrastructure' and a linked action to develop a strategic commissioning plan for children's services. The Joint Area Review recommended the development of an overarching commissioning strategy for children's social care services.
- 3.2 A project board was convened and has met on six occasions to develop the Strategy. The project board membership comprises representatives from ECSL, the PCT and the voluntary sector.
- 3.3 A consultant, Dinos Kousoulou, was engaged to secure the additional expertise and capacity necessary to develop the Strategy.
- 3.4 The Integrated Strategy provides a framework for the Council and Primary Care Trust (PCT) to agree jointly commissioning intentions and priorities for the next 3 years whilst allowing both organisations to retain responsibility for their own commissioning of services.
- 3.5 The objectives of the Strategy are to:
- Ensure the services commissioned by the Authority and the PCT are user focused, meet identified and projected needs and are cost effective
 - Present information about the trends, current needs and future demands for commissioned services for children and families
 - Describe the strength and capacity of the local market to meet current needs and projected needs
 - Identify current and future gaps in commissioned service
 - and, take into account the development of the Children's Area Partnerships and the Children's Trust.
- 3.6 The development of the Strategy has drawn on an extensive range of published guidance.
- 3.7 The scope of the Strategy includes the commissioning of services for:
- Children with disabilities and complex needs, including mental health needs
 - Children with special needs who are placed in out-borough provision and children excluded from school
 - Children who are fostered, in residential care or in receipt of post-adoption support
 - Childcare
 - Support services for families and children

It excludes services that are provided by the Council or the extensive provision of services for children and young people from within the local health economy.

- 3.8 The Strategy is closely linked to 'Promoting Positive Futures: Enfield's Children and Young People's Plan 2006-2009' but also draws information from a range of other sources. The needs analysis that informs the Children's Plan has been a key source of information for this strategy: a separate consultation exercise has not been undertaken.
- 3.9 The Strategy will be supported by a range of service-specific purchasing plans.
- 3.10 The Strategy was adopted by the Children's Board at their meeting in July. The PCT Board is considering it at a future date.
- 3.11 It is anticipated that the Strategy will require further development in about year's time to:
- Address infrastructure issues including the advantages and disadvantages of joint commissioning and the formal adoption of pooled budgets
 - To broaden its scope to include, for example, the commissioning responsibilities of the Children's Trust in relation to Youth Matters and any changes stemming from the Education and Inspections Bill
 - Take into account experience of using the Strategy and any further guidance

4. PROPOSALS

The Strategy is attached.

5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board's (CYPSPB) Change for Children Programme Plan includes an objective 'to ensure that effective commissioning arrangements are developed, including supporting infrastructure' and a linked action to develop a strategic commissioning plan for children's services. The Joint Area Review recommended the development of an overarching commissioning strategy for children's social care services.

6. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE RESOURCES AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS

6.1 Financial Implications

The Strategy highlights possible future increases and reductions in demand for various types of service provision for children including those provided by the council. There are no detailed proposals concerning the redirection of financial resources or the identification of

budget pressures. When such future proposals are formally identified they will need to be incorporated within the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). One of the main intentions of the Children and Young People's Plan 2006-09 is to reinvest financial efficiencies within ECSL to extend the provision of preventative services. Any proposals will need to be prioritised alongside other competing budget priorities within the MTFP process.

The Integrated Commissioning Strategy will allow the Council and the PCT to jointly agree commissioning intentions and priorities for the next 3 years. However, both organisations will still retain their own decision-making ability to set the level of commissioned services provided within the resources available to them. The Strategy will not limit the Council's freedom to allocate, increase or decrease its resources as it sees fit. There is also no intention to 'pool' or 'ring fence' funding in an agreement between the PCT and the Council.

6.2 Legal Implications

Section 10 Children Act 2004 requires the London Borough of Enfield as a Children's Services Authority to make arrangements to promote co-operation between us and our partners (such as the PCT and Voluntary Sector) with a view to improving the well being of children in our area. This includes children's mental and physical health, protection from harm or neglect, education, social/economic well being and also their own contribution to society. Further, the Joint Area Review held under section 20 of the Children Act 2004 evaluates the extent to which children's services in an area are improving and how the agencies work together to achieve this. The integrated commissioning strategy proposed here is the borough's response to their section 10 duties and the recommendation arising from the Joint Area Review.

6.2 Performance Management Implications

Implementation of the Commissioning Strategy will ensure the council is compliant with a key recommendation of the Joint Area Review and requirements contained within the Children Act 2004 to promote the integration of commissioned services across agencies.

6.3 Corporate Procurement

I agree with the need to review the strategy in one year, especially as impending legislation may change the focus;

There needs to be a plan for the improved collection, collation and distribution of data between partners so that this can form a benchmark for future measurement of performance against the strategy. The early identification of a deadline for when key data will be identified, collected, shared and used would be useful – I think there should be clearer commitment to this in the strategy; maybe you could put this down as something that would be ready for the annual review.

Whilst the review of quantitative data is important it is also imperative that care packages are reviewed regularly for the qualitative assessment of whether they continue to meet the need of the client group; this will drive the value for money outputs we are all expected to demonstrate.

7. PUTTING ENFIELD FIRST

The Strategy contributes to the delivery of: Aim 2, High Quality Education and Lifelong Learning; Aim 4, Quality health and social care for local people and Aim 5, Supporting the delivery of excellent services.

Background Papers