

Report

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Report to:	Social Work Resources Committee
Date of Meeting:	15 November 2017
Report by:	Executive Director (Education Resources) Director, Health and Social Care

Subject:	South Lanarkshire's Children's Services Plan
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1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ provide an update in relation to progress made to develop a new Children's Services Plan for South Lanarkshire, to ensure compliance with the duty set out within the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the content of the report be noted.

3. Background

3.1. Partners have been working to comply with the new legislation outlined in Part three of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, which places a duty on the Council and Health Board to put in place a Children's Services Plan for South Lanarkshire by April 2017, that follows the legal framework set out in the Act.

3.2. Guidance provided for authorities on the Act asks us to set out clear strategic aims of the Plan that incorporates five sub aims within the legislation:

- ◆ safeguards, supports and promotes wellbeing of children
- ◆ ensures action is taken at the earliest appropriate time
- ◆ that action is integrated from the viewpoint of service users
- ◆ Services constitute the best use of available resources
- ◆ related services are provided with the intention of safeguarding, supporting and promoting wellbeing

3.3. The Act also places a duty on partners to work to integrate service provision with an aim of facilitating better outcomes and preventing negative outcomes from arising and to improve efficiency by avoiding duplication.

3.4. The Children's Services Plan, requires us to tell the story of where we have come from (improvements already achieved), where we are now and where we want to get to by describing how the wellbeing of children and young people will be improved.

- 3.5. Within South Lanarkshire, there is existing good practice of having a published Children's Services Plan with strong governance and reporting arrangements, including a published Annual Report.

4. Progress

- 4.1. The process of scoping out the new plan has been helped by the strong partnership ethos already in place including the governance structure, the 2016/2017 Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) with its high level themes and the work of the strategic sub groups (Corporate Parenting, Substance Misuse and Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) Transformation) which are reflected in the aforementioned PIP.
- 4.2. The process of writing the Children's Services Plan has also been helped by the following:
- ◆ the culture of producing an annual report and the areas for improvement identified in the 2015/2016 Annual Report
 - ◆ an Improvement Action Plan, produced after the joint inspection of Children's Services in 2014
 - ◆ the work of strategic working groups such as the Mental Health Task and Finish Group
 - ◆ the Corporate Parenting Strategy and supporting Action Plan
 - ◆ the work towards creating a refreshed suite of measures/indicators for moving forward to be supported by the activity of the Realigning Children's Services (RCS) Programme
 - ◆ data already held by partners such as Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE), PLACE/Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) and the Strategic Needs Assessment created for the Health and Social Care Partnership; and
 - ◆ the systems and structures already in place that identify need e.g. Early Years Multi Agency Support Meetings, Domestic Abuse Screening, Early and Effective Intervention/Youth Offending, Homelessness, Information Sharing etc
- 4.3. Partners, on behalf of the Getting it Right for South Lanarkshire's Children Partnership Board, have been working on Realigning Children's Services, a national programme led by the Scottish Government, to support local improvement in joint strategic commissioning practice. It focuses on improved evidence collection, analysis and a strengthening of partnership working across all agencies involved in Children's Services. It also supports the Scottish Government's principles of Public Service Reform and the approach to GIRFEC.
- 4.4. The process of scoping out the Children's Services Plan has been informed by the wealth of data available in South Lanarkshire and also by ensuring input from a wide range of stakeholders. This includes:-
- ◆ a 'mini' Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) carried out in 2015;
 - ◆ the work of the Continuous Improvement Group in gathering single agency data. (A three year trend analysis on the agreed data set has provided a good raft of indicators for consideration)

- ◆ data that can be accessed via South Lanarkshire Council's Central Research Unit (CRU) with support from CRU colleagues
- ◆ additional data that can be made available by partners and through consultation with stakeholders
- ◆ Some initial findings from the RCS Programme

4.5. In addition, the RCS programme is beginning to provide valuable analysis that will inform years two and three of the plan. Reports on the extensive consultation carried out last year as part of the programme have only just been received and the main findings will be considered by the partners over the coming months.

4.6. In developing the plan we also considered other key drivers e.g. experience from the Joint Inspection and resultant improvement actions, the Child Protection Business Plan, Corporate Parenting Strategy and supporting Action Plan, Community Learning and Development Plan, Early Learning and Childcare Planning, A Fairer Healthier Scotland, Mental Health Strategy for Scotland 2016 and the Health and Social Care Strategic Plan.

4.7. A wide range of stakeholders were engaged through a series of consultations which took place in March of this year and focused on the creation of an updated vision, proposed high level themes and identified outcomes and measures. Over 230 people, representing all of Children's Services planning partners, participated in either a Senior Managers Seminar or one of two locally delivered events. This activity directly informed decisions made around the content of the Plan.

4.8. The plan has a refreshed vision that reflects where we are as a partnership, and what we aspire to achieve for children, young people and families across South Lanarkshire:

'Children, young people and families will be safeguarded and supported to reach their full potential and thrive within their communities.'

This vision is underpinned by a commitment to:-

- ◆ tackle inequality, discrimination and poverty
- ◆ promote early support and prevention
- ◆ focus on those areas where working together will make the biggest impact on children, young people and families
- ◆ ensure a multi-agency approach to continuous improvement
- ◆ implement a Workforce Development Strategy that builds the competence and confidence of our staff
- ◆ ensure meaningful participation and engagement of children, young people and families
- ◆ workforce development

4.9. The priorities set out within the Children’s Services Plan centre on three key themes, each with a high-level outcome. These are:-

- ◆ **Prevention and Early Support:** Children have the best start in life and are supported to realise their potential
- ◆ **Health and Wellbeing:** The health and wellbeing of children and young people is improved
- ◆ **Supporting Vulnerable Groups and Keeping Children Safe:** The life chances of our children with additional support needs and our most vulnerable children and young people are improved

4.10. A number of prioritised areas for action sit under each of the three themes. These areas for action have been identified as a result of interrogating the available data and where we have identified the need for improvement. The areas for action are set out in the following grid:-

Children have the best start in life and are supported to realise their potential.	The health and wellbeing of children, young people and families is improved.	The life chances of our most vulnerable children and young people are improved.
Children’s exposure to second hand smoke in pregnancy and early childhood is reduced	Emotional and behavioural concerns in early years is reduced	Employability of care experienced young people is improved
The number of children living in low income households is reduced	More children and young people are a healthy weight	Attainment for care experienced children and young people is improved Reduce the impact of parental substance misuse on children and young people
Speech, language and communication in early years is improved	Health and wellbeing of care experienced children and young people is improved	Attendance at school for care experienced children and young people is improved
School attendance of children and young people in the most deprived communities is improved	Emotional wellbeing of children and young people is improved	The rate of repeat referrals to the Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration (SCRA) is reduced
Attainment of children and young people in the most deprived communities is improved	Substance misuse by young people is reduced	Support to children and families affected by homelessness is improved

Employability of young people within the most deprived communities is improved	Teenage pregnancies in under 16's is reduced	Support to children and families affected by domestic abuse is improved
		Support to children and young people affected by parental substance misuse is improved
		Support to young carers is improved
		Support to children and young people with additional support needs is improved

4.11. The content of the Children's Services Plan, along with the analysis of available data and the consultation activity carried out with the stakeholders, has been shared with partners developing the Local Outcome Improvement Plan.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1. We will seek to use the information provided by the RCS programme which can be aligned with this planning activity and, after thorough scrutiny by the Partnership, we expect this to inform years two and three of the Plan.
- 5.2. There is also a need to consider local commissioning processes based on robust information about needs, costs and quality and engagement of service users. The RCS Programme is well placed to provide the key drivers for this demand.
- 5.3. The Children's Services Senior Managers' Event held on 6 October 2017, provided information on the process and content of the plan and began exploring potential areas for change informed by the RCS programme.
- 5.4. There is an expectation that the Partnership will begin to work to shift spend from higher tariff (and therefore more expensive) provision to earlier (less expensive) activity e.g. reductions in externally accommodated children/young people/reduction in number of places in children's houses. In addition a range of other initiatives such as the Family Nurse Partnership, Breaking the Cycle, Pupil Equity Funding, etc. have allowed us to evidence where models of prevention and early intervention can, and do, have a financial benefit as well as a positive wellbeing impact.
- 5.5. It is intended that a summary version of the plan that is accessible to children, young people and the wider community will be produced.
- 5.6. The draft Children's Services Plan will be presented to the Executive Committee for approval. Copies have been made available in the Members' Areas.

6. Employee Implications

- 6.1. There are no employee implications associated with this report

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1. There are no financial implications associated with this report

8. Other Implications

8.1. There are no risk or sustainability issues associated with this report

9. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

9.1. There are no Equality Impact Assessment or consultation arrangement implications associated with this report

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24 October 2017

Link(s) to Council Objectives/Values

- Raise educational achievement and attainment
- Protect vulnerable children, young people and adults

Previous References

None

List of Background Papers

- Council Plan

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:- Anne Donaldson, Head of Education (Inclusion)

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