

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Minutes of the meeting of the Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee
held on Tuesday, 8th August 2011 at 6.00 p.m. in the Reception Suite, Civic
Offices, Telford

PRESENT: Councillors G. Green (Chairman), S. Burrell, J. Greenaway, K. Guy, J. Loveridge, A. Mackenzie, C. Turley, Co-optees A. Atkinson, M. Ward.

Also Present: Councillor P. Watling (Cabinet Member Children & Young People); Cllr. A. England; Laura Johnston, Interim Director of Children's Services; Clive Jones, Head of Family & Community Services; Stephanie Jones, Interim Scrutiny Group Specialist.

CYPSC-1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor M. Ion, Co-optees S. Ali, S. Harris, E. Ofori, Jim Collins, Head of School Improvement.

CYPSC-2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

CYPSC-3 CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and made some opening remarks. The role of the Committee is to review and monitor services provided to the 38,000 children and young people in the borough to ensure the Council is doing its best for them, and to suggest ways that services could be improved within the available resources. A key area of work would be to continue to monitor services to the 280 children and young people within the authority's care, in line with the statutory duty all elected members have as corporate parents. The Committee brings together a wealth of skills and experience in elected members and co-optees.

For the benefit of new members, the Scrutiny Group Specialist explained the role of co-optees on the Committee.

- There are four statutory co-opted members:
 - A secondary Parent Governor Representative (PGR) (Emma Ofori) and a primary PGR (Mel Ward). The PGRs are primarily to represent parents rather than governors.
 - Representatives the Church of England diocese (vacant) and the Catholic diocese (Austin Atkinson) as they have maintained schools within the authority area.

The statutory co-optees have voting rights on education matters.

- There are currently three non-statutory co-optees:
 - A Higher Education representative (Shaukat Ali)
 - A school head-teacher representative (Sue Harris)
 - A young people's representative (Phoebe Lill)The non-statutory co-optees do not have voting rights

CYPSC-4 CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE REVIEW

The Cabinet member made some opening remarks. He welcomed the appointment of Laura Johnston as Interim Director of Children's Services. The Council was facing significant budget cuts and the focus of the service review was on finding new ways of delivering services so that the best possible services to children and young people could be maintained. The Cabinet member commended the dedication of staff.

The Interim Director of Children's Services explained that the service review was now in Phase 2 with proposals due to be launched in October. The staffing restructure from Phase 1 was going on. A discussion with scrutiny about the proposals would be welcomed.

The Head of Family & Community Services presented an update on the service review and structure proposals from Phase 1 of the Family & Community, Safeguarding, School Improvement Service Review. In addition to the presentation circulated with the papers for the meeting, an update report on the Review of Services for Care & Support, Children, Families & Schools (which is combined with the Adult Care & Support) was tabled which reflected the changes made through the consultation process.

The service review dated back to July 2010 as a whole-scale review of children's and adult services. The process had involved widespread engagement with staff, independent critical challenge and consideration of service issues, the financial position and anticipated government policy. Early issues had been identified as silo working, complex and ineffective communication between staff in clusters and partners, confused service access points putting additional pressure on social services, and "baton passing" - all of which had contributed to higher cost outcomes.

The key principles behind the service review were effective early intervention and prevention, with a focus on self-help and self service, to achieve better outcomes and savings. The Family Connect model would provide a single, integrated point of access for all services. The Contact Centre would take all calls, manage routine enquiries, or refer calls to a multi-agency triage team made up of appropriately trained staff from a range of partners. The triage team would put in place the appropriate intervention. Safeguarding issues would go straight to the safeguarding team. This would be supported by a CRM system with a single electronic view so that addresses with multiple needs could be picked up. The aim was to identify issues early on and put in place the appropriate preventative intervention.

Staffing structures had been rationalised and brought together. Managers were working more closely together with a 2 weekly meeting.

A schools partnership trust model was being developed to support greater collaboration between schools to improve learning and achievement.

Phase 1 of the proposals had been launched in February for 90 days consultation and had received overwhelming support for the majority of the proposals. The management structure was now in place to deliver the services and was shown in the report.

Phase 2 proposals for the rest of the workforce would be launched on 18th October for 90 days consultation and could be brought to scrutiny as part of the consultation process.

In the restructure the number of managers had been reduced by half. Current services would continue to run until March 2012 and the changes would be introduced in April 2012.

The members asked a number of questions about the proposals.

- **Regarding the education and employment offer, how is the employment aspect of getting young people into work picked up in the structure, and is this within the remit of this Committee?**

The School Improvement team under Jim Collins and the Employment & Skills team under Peter Smith work closely together and there are regular management meetings. The School Improvement team is focussing on the 14-19 agenda. Issues relating to getting young people into employment would fall within the remit of this Committee.

- **How will the Co-operative Commission affect the service review, and how were members of the Co-operative Commission selected (i.e. are you communicating with all schools including trust boards and academies)?**

The process for selecting Commissioners for the Co-operative Commission was inclusive. The schools trust partnership will involve all schools, although is targeting the trust boards in the first instance.

- **With regard to the 14-19 agenda, there were some serious potential investors involved with the University Technical College proposal earlier this year. What is the current position on this?**

The University Technical College is one model for delivering the 14-19 agenda suggested by the government. All models are now being considered for what is best and most sustainable for Telford & Wrekin. Any plans will be consulted on widely and with people with the right skills and experience. The Head of School Improvement would be able to provide more information.

- **Trust schools are statutorily accountable for academic performance but they also have a duty to educate in social standards and skills. Can the school Trust model be developed to include accountability for social skills education as there is a currently a gap here?**

We would see this as an element to be enriched and will be pushing for this. Under the Trust model, schools are more accountable for academic achievement than social skills but this is influenced by national legislation. We want to build a good relationship with the trust schools and to involve local communities with these kinds of issues.

- **If there are emergency situations which occur out of hours (for example from children and young people left on their own) when the contact centre is closed, who would people call in these circumstances?**

Some services will need to work non-traditional hours and we will work with partners on this. Currently people call the police in emergency situations who then contact the out of hours emergency duty service.

The Chairman suggested that information about emergency contact numbers should be disseminated to all elected members, and that a Members' Information Seminar should be provided at the appropriate time to make members aware of the service changes.

- **How confident are you that the police refer calls, especially from children, to the emergency duty team?**
Data is available and reported in the annual report. The Interim Director was confident that the police respond to emergencies immediately for example two children had recently come into care through police protection orders.
- **What is the schools trust partnership, and what effect will it have in future?**
The schools trust partnership model is being developed and it is about effecting greater co-operation and collaboration between schools, and their local communities. Secondary trust schools will be targeted in the first instance, but we aim to work with all schools to support learning to create a level playing field for children and young people across the borough. It is at an early stage of development, and the Head of School Improvement would be able to provide more information.
- **Are there similar models in other authorities?**
This is new in Telford. There is a mix of different types of schools across the borough and we will take an inclusive approach in its development.

RESOLVED –

That the Phase 2 proposals would be brought to the Committee after 18th October to review during the consultation period.

CYPSC-5 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the suggestions and issues carried over from previous scrutiny arrangements in Appendix 1 of the report on the 2011/12 Work Programme and discussed which items to include in the work programme.

Cllrs. Burrell and Guy left the meeting at 7.00p.m.

RESOLVED –

- **That the items shown in Appendix 1 of these minutes would be included in the work programme, or otherwise dealt with as shown.**
- **That the next 2 meetings would be held at 6.00pm on 19th September and 20th October.**

Other meeting dates would be agreed with the Committee by e-mail.

The meeting ended at 8.00 p.m.

Chairman:

Date:

Appendix 1

Work Programme

	Suggestion	Agreed	Comments
1	Youth Services	Include in the work programme as a key review.	Expand scope to the youth offer and link to the service review of youth provision. Need to identify what cyp want. Needs further scoping.
2	Corporate Parenting (CP)– Members' role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include 2 meetings with CIC (or care leavers) in the work programme • Include 2 dedicated CP meetings in the work programme to follow-up on issues from meetings with CIC, and to review other CP items agreed by members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee should pursue the aim of making CP training mandatory for elected members • Members need further discussion to agree the items/monitoring information for CP meetings - the new Corporate Parenting Strategy is being developed – this can come to the committee to help members decide what to review • LJ will ask the Participation Worker to get feedback from the CIC/care leavers about how they want to meet scrutiny members
3	CP – foster carers	As 2	Noted there has been very good work in recruiting/retaining foster carers
4	CP – social workers	As 2	Noted there is a national shortage of social workers which impacts and is difficult to influence
5	CP - safeguarding	As 2	A peer review and recent inspection showed substantial improvements in safeguarding – to be discussed further at CP meeting
6	School Improvement Team	Include in the work programme	Noted it will be some time before services are developed sufficiently to come to scrutiny – suggested timing March/April 2012
7	Short Breaks for disabled children	Include in the work programme as a key review.	Needs to be scoped. Consider mandatory/non-mandatory requirements, support for families, views of cyp.
8	Access to library/leisure facilities at HLC	Not included in the work programme	Refer to Co-operative & Communities Scrutiny Committee
9	Child Poverty	Include in the work programme as a key review.	Needs further scoping. – Report of meeting of officers and members on child poverty to come to Committee

			<p>– Link into existing work streams – possibly Co-operative Commission</p> <p>Members' views expressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review should consider how child poverty is identified and equity of provision across the borough • Review should look forward at how we can help improve the chances of yp getting into employment • Review should look at immediate problems of child poverty
10	CYP service review	Include in work programme	After 18 th October
11	BSF programme	Include in the work programme	Update report as soon as possible – focus on risks Possibly receive periodic reviews/updates when decisions are made
12	Contact issues for CIC	As 2	
13	Adoption service premises	Not included in the work programme	Request written update from head of joint adoption service
14	UK YP	Not included in the work programme	Chairman to approve letter and send to schools
15	CP – placement stability	As 2	
16	CP education attainment	As 2	

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

**REPORT TO CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 19th
SEPTEMBER 2011**

BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE UPDATE

**ABRAHAM DARBY ACADEMY – NEW BUILDING CANOPY COLLAPSE – 25TH
AUGUST 2011**

The steel and timber canopy over the entrance to the new Abraham Darby Academy building, being constructed by Kier Moss Ltd, collapsed on Thursday 25th August 2011, injuring 5 men who were working on top of it at the time. All 5 men were discharged from hospital by Sunday 28th August 2011.

The cause of the collapse is not known. The Health & Safety Executive (H&SE) is investigating. T&W has appointed its BSF Technical Advisor, Mott Macdonald, to carry out an investigation on its behalf, in conjunction with H&SE. Kier is carrying out its own internal reviews. The investigations are likely to take weeks, rather than days to provide their findings.

The academy has re-opened for the autumn term in its existing buildings as planned. The car park and other works being carried out on the existing school site during the summer holidays were completed on schedule.

The incident will have an affect on the overall construction programme. It was planned that the academy and primary school would open in their new buildings in January 2012. At this stage it seems unlikely that the academy will be able to open then. The primary school building was unaffected by the collapsed canopy and the situation with regard to the Leisure Centre is being assessed. No decisions have been taken but contingency plans are being developed.

CONTRACTUAL POSITION

T&W has a design and build, fixed price contract with Kier. The incident will not increase the contract price.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

The safety of the new buildings is a key issue. Thorough checks of the design and structures are being carried out by Kier and by Mott MacDonald on behalf of T&W. The buildings will not be open to the public until they are deemed safe.

COSTS

Through the contract, Kier bear the cost of remedial work. However, costs incurred by T&W, such as the investigation by Mott MacDonald, will have to be borne by the Council and are unlikely to be covered by insurance. The duration of the investigation is unknown at present.

OTHER WORK WITH KIER

In 2009, following a tender process for a framework contract, Kier were selected as the Council's contractor for work under the BSF programme. They were awarded the contract for the Abraham Darby Sports and Learning Community in April 2010 and the contract for works at Madeley Academy in January 2011. As part of the framework contract the Council is working with Kier to develop other BSF schemes at Dawley (for the new buildings for Phoenix School) and at Newport Girls' High School Academy Trust and Mount Gilbert Special School. Contracts have not yet been awarded for these schemes. However, if they are not awarded by 31st December 2011 they will not be eligible under the current framework contract and will have to be carried out under the new framework contract. This would mean they would be likely to be delayed by up to one year.

PROJECT APPROVAL PROCESS

The BSF projects were all approved in principle by Cabinet at the Outline Business Case stage and again in January 2011 to acknowledge the changes in scope due to the government's savings measures introduced in November 2010. However, as each project is brought forward for development, it has to be approved by Partnerships for Schools (PfS) (Stage 0 approval) and then once the design and costs are finalised, Cabinet and PfS approval will be sought for the Final Business Case (FBC). Once these approvals are given, T&W is in a position to award the fixed price design and build contract.

FINANCE

The approved Council Capital Programme includes £144.1m funding for the BSF Project covering the financial periods 2011/12 to 2016/17. The allocation was approved by Council 3rd March 2011.

EXTERNAL ADVISORS

External legal, technical and financial advisors have been appointed to support the in-house project team. All 3 firms were appointed at an early stage of the BSF project and their contracts are due to expire shortly. New advisors' framework contracts will be put in place and it is expected that there will be significant cost savings compared with the existing arrangements.

PROGRAMME

The outline programme is shown below:

<u>SERIAL</u>	<u>ACTIVITY</u>	<u>PLANNED DATE</u>
1	Award contracts for: Phoenix School; Newport Girls High School Academy Trust; Mount Gilbert Special School	December 2011
2	Open Woodlands Primary School	January 2012 (Tentative)

3	Open Abraham Darby Academy	Not known yet
4	Phoenix School Opens	September 2013
5	Ercall Wood Technology College Opens	Early 2014

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Project Director BSF
Ext 80992
9 Sep 11

CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY

2011 – 2014

DRAFT 3

Draft 1 Passed to LJ for comment 7 June 2011
Includes comments from KP 13 June 2011
Safeguarding Management team 16 June 2011
Sent to DM & JR 20 June 2011
Added amendments form CIT team 2011

Draft 2 Includes comments from FZ and DM 22 July
Comments added following meeting with Chloe de Poix (Care Council) 22 July
Corporate Parenting Leadership team 12 August

Draft 3 passed to LJ 9 August
Scrutiny for comment 19 September

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CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY

2011 – 2013

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 National Context:

Children in the care of local authorities are one of the most vulnerable groups in society. The majority of children in care are there because they have suffered abuse or neglect. At any one time around 60,000 children are looked after in England (of whom some 59% are subject to care orders). Some 90,000 children are looked after at some point in any one year. *(DFE, 1 April 2011)*

Most looked after children are in foster care (73%), whilst some 10% are in children's homes and the remainder are cared for in a number of different settings including residential schools and placements with parents. *(DFE, 1 April 2011)*

The circumstances and experiences of looked after children and young people mean that they can experience many disadvantages and hence poorer outcomes than other children, across a range of measure including health and education.

The Government's White paper, *Care Matters: Time for Change* published in June 2007 sets out the steps to be taken by government in partnership with local government, the voluntary and private sector and the wider children's workforce to improve the outcomes for children and young people in care.

The revised legal framework for looked after children comes into force on 1 April 2011 and aims to support frontline staff in making professional judgements based on best practice and on a clear cycle of assessment, planning, intervention and review.

1.2 Local Context:

Here in Telford and Wrekin we currently have 270 children and young people in care as at 31 May 2011. This has steadily increased from 233 in 2008 to a peak in of 289 in December 2010. In May 2011 our children in care rate was 68.5 per 10,000 compared with the national average of 58 (as at the end of March 2010)

Of the 270 children in care 39 (14.4%) are from a BME background. Throughout 2010/2011 the largest age group of children in care is 10-15 years (currently accounting for 41.3% (112) of the total children in care population.

With respect to placements 13 Children have been placed for adoption as at the end of May 2011, 86.3% are cared for within a family setting, 33 (12.1%) are in residential placements and 3 (1.1%) live independently; 142 are placed in area whilst 129 are placed out of area. Placement stability is crucial to positive outcomes for children in care, In 2010/11 11.5% of Children in Care in Telford and Wrekin had 3 placements or more, although above the national average of 10.9% in 2009/10 it is improving on previous years outcomes.

Within Telford and Wrekin we know that in general terms outcomes for children and young people in care and care leavers have not kept pace with those of their peers:

- At Key Stage 2 five out of ten (50%) of young people reached level 4 in English and the same number reached level 4 in maths, this compares with 75% of all children sitting the tests, achieving level 4 or above in both English and maths (2010)
- At Key Stage 4 two out of twenty (10%) achieved 5 A*-GCSEs (or equivalent), compared to a figure of 55.9% for all young people who sat the exams (2010)
- 87.5% of care leavers aged 19 were living in suitable accommodation as judged by the council as at the end of March 2011, compared to the England average of 94% in 2009/10
- Ten out of twenty four (41.6%) former care leavers were not in Education Employment or Training (NEET) compared to a figure of 7.8% for all 16-18 year olds (2010/2011)

Given our corporate parenting responsibilities this picture of education outcomes in particular for children and young people in care and care leavers in Telford and Wrekin is not acceptable; this strategy provides the key mechanism for driving improvement.

1.3 Challenges faced by Children and Young People in Care

Placement Stability

Children in Care are more likely to experience poorer outcomes if their care needs are not matched to the right placement at both a strategic and individual level. Our aim is for all children in care to have placements that meet their social, health and educational needs and provide effective support to enable them to achieve their full potential. Our **Children in Care Placements Commissioning Strategy** is a partner document whose actions will be addressed/incorporated as part of the Corporate Parenting action plan; it sets out how we will match the requirements of children and young people in care with appropriate placements and resources to meet identified needs,

Educational Achievement

The Social Exclusion Unit's report A Better Education for Children in Care identified five key reasons why looked after children underachieve in education:

- their lives are characterised by instability
- they spend too much time out of school
- they do not have sufficient help with their education if they fall behind
- primary carers are not expected or equipped to provide sufficient support and encouragement for learning and development
- they have unmet emotional, mental and physical health needs that impact on their education

As such these issues have informed the action plan which will drive improved outcomes for our children in care

Children and young people missing from care

Many cases of missing children and young people involve children in care; particularly those resident in children's care homes operated primarily by private care providers. Here in Telford and Wrekin there were 389 episodes of missing children and young people; 59 absent from placements in Telford and

Wrekin and 111 from placements outside of Telford and Wrekin; the remainder were missing from home.

Although the majority of looked after children do not experience missing episodes, those who do can be forced to stay in environments that are harmful to their safety and well being and so end up engaging in activities that may put them at risk.

Our **Joint Protocol for reporting Missing Children and Young People** sets out how using partnership, problem solving and performance management we will continue to reduce repeat runaway behavior and safeguard some of our most vulnerable children.

Teenage Pregnancy

National research has shown that by the age of 20, one quarter of young people who had been in care were young parents and 40% were mothers; local data suggests that this is also a challenge for us here in Telford and Wrekin. Our action plan will ensure that children in care are properly targeted by health promotion specialists and other sexual health services which will be designed to reduce teenage pregnancy.

Emotional Health & Wellbeing

Evidence from some previous studies suggests that looked after children are nearly five times more likely to have a mental health disorder than all children. Individualised and comprehensive health assessments and health needs plans will ensure that children and young people are signposted to and quickly able to access relevant support and treatment services.

Youth Offending

A recent report by prison inspectors (May 2011) shows that one quarter of the 1,600 children held in young offenders' institutions (YOIs) in England and Wales have been in care. As a result of our Service Review of Adult and Children's Services our management teams in Safeguarding and Family and Community Services will become more integrated, taking joint responsibility to intervene early to prevent children in care going on to offend or to break the cycle of re-offending

2. OUR AMBITION

To secure the best possible outcomes for our children and young people in care so that as care leavers they have life chances and opportunities that are at least equal to those of their peers.

We will do this by providing good quality care and support whilst children and young people are in care coupled with appropriate continuity of contact to ensure gradual transition into independent living.

3. OUR ROLE AS CORPORATE PARENTS

Our responsibility in improving outcomes and actively promoting the life chances of children and young people that we look after has become known as corporate parenting, in recognition of the fact that the task must be shared by the whole local authority and partner agencies.

This corporate parenting role is shared on the behalf of the Local Authority by the Director of Children's Services (DCS) and the Lead Member (LM), who together take responsibility and accountability for the wellbeing and future outcomes of our children in care and care leavers.

3.1 Role of the DCS and Lead Member

Our Corporate Parenting Strategy sets out what we need to achieve in order to realise our ambitions for children and young people in care and care leavers. It is one of the key mechanisms by which the DCS will ensure that services:

- Support good parenting from every person involved in the child's life
- Are planned and provided to take account of children and young people's views so that they have a real say in the decisions that affect their future
- Provide children and young people with stability in their lives
- Raise the aspirations of looked after children by expecting the same of them as any parent would expect from their own children

(Statutory Guidance: The Roles and Responsibilities of the Lead member for Children's Services and the Director of Children's Services)

The strategy is owned by the Corporate Parenting Leadership Team, which is chaired by the DCS and made up of senior officers with responsibility for the corporate parenting of children in care. The LM is also as a member of this team, taking a political role in ensuring that the processes are in place for both the DCS and the LM to fulfil their duties and to be the best possible corporate parents for our children and young people in care and care leavers;

3.2 Governance Arrangements – See Appendix 1

The Corporate Parenting Strategy is owned at the highest level by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Executive. The Children's Trust Board (CTB) is accountable to the LSP Executive for ensuring that the partnership arrangements are in place to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people in care and care leavers.

The CTB is also committed to ensuring that the most vulnerable children and young people achieve more and are prepared for adult life. The CPLT is the subgroup responsible to the CTB for making this happen, for our children and young people in care and care leavers. It oversees and owns the implementation of the action plan which supports the delivery of the Corporate Parenting Strategy. In particular it ensures that there are good joint working relationships between council service delivery units and with partner agencies, holding them to account for the delivery of cost effective high quality services.

The CPLT will draw upon support and challenge from the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) to ensure that the Corporate Parenting Strategy effectively safeguards and promotes the welfare of our children in care.

To ensure that council services and councillors alike are committed to fulfilling their corporate parenting responsibilities the Corporate Parenting Leadership Team reports through to the Corporate Management Team which is chaired by the Chief Executive of the Council. The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee holds two committees per annum focussed on Corporate Parenting plus

two to meet with children in care and care leavers in person – the format of which is being developed by the care Council.

One of our key actions will be to re-visit the delivery arrangements within the governance structure to ensure that it is fit for purpose; there should be no duplication and we intend that sub groups are integrating to take a holistic approach to improving outcomes. Governance arrangements in relation to the Health and Wellbeing Board are evolving.

3.3 Voice of the child and young person

Our Care Council 4 You (CC4u) ensures that children and young people have the opportunity to voice their opinions and share their experiences with those responsible for Corporate Parenting. It acts as a voice for all children and young people in care and influences policy and decisions at the highest level.

In developing the Corporate Parenting Strategy we have taken account of what our children in care consider a good corporate parent should be, someone who:

- Treats you with respect
- Listens to you and takes your opinions seriously
- Treats you as an individual
- Is always truthful with you and won't make promises that can't be kept

These characteristics are included in the Telford and Wrekin Pledge (see Appendix 2) which is a set of promises that the council has made to our children and young people in care. The Telford and Wrekin Pledge forms a high profile aspect of this strategy and is monitored at statutory reviews of core plans using a format designed by CC4U.

As part of the monitoring and evaluation process that supports the delivery of the Corporate Parenting Strategy we will work with the Care Council to ensure that children and young people in care have the opportunity to discuss and give feedback on the quality of services they receive. The evaluation of how well we have implemented the Telford and Wrekin Pledge will form a key aspect of this process.

Our Participation Worker, works with our Care Council to enable children and young people in care to share their experiences, express their views and shape future services in a way that reflects their needs and their hopes for the future and is therefore a key member of the Corporate Parenting Leadership Team.

4. OUR OBJECTIVES – WHAT WE NEED TO ACHIEVE

We have structured our strategy around achieving the Every Child matters (ECM) outcomes whilst using the DFE revised legal framework to ensure that we have considered all aspects of a child or young person's journey through care.

Below we have described what we see as the key elements of each outcome; based on what we know about our children in care we have then identified what we need to achieve, which will become the objectives for our supporting action plan.

The named guidance and regulations highlighted in italics are embedded within service planning of both the council and its partner agencies to ensure high quality care for all of our children and young people in care.

4.1 Being Healthy

To promote the physical and emotional wellbeing of children in care by supporting healthy lifestyles and secure attachments and friendships. We also want to enable children and young people in care to take part in positive out of school activities whilst reducing risk taking behaviour.

- Provide timely and effective health services which recognise the very special requirements of many children and young people in care
- Identify and meet the emotional and mental health needs of children in care and care leavers
- Minimise risk taking behaviour (substance and alcohol misuse, smoking, unsafe sex and teenage pregnancy) and provide support and treatment where required

Statutory Guidance on promoting the health and well being of looked after children (November 2009)

4.2 Staying Safe

To protect children and young people in care from harm and ill treatment, giving them the opportunity to grow up feeling safe, cared for and secure. Delivered through the Children in Care Placements Commissioning Strategy and Sufficiency Duty 2010-2013

- Ensure a strategic approach to the development of care placements to reflect the changing needs of children in care. (Strategic Development)
- Keep children with families where it is safe and sensible to do so thereby reducing the number of children coming into care (Prevention and re-habilitation)
- Implement the Sufficient Duty to meet the placement needs of children in care and on the edge care (Sufficiency Duty)

The Children Act 1989 Guidance and Regulations Volume 2: Care Planning, Placement and Case Review (March 2010)

4.3 Enjoy and Achieve

To promote our children and young people's educational aspirations and support their achievements. This will include enabling them to participate in a wide range of enjoyable activities both in and out of school so that they can become active learners and therefore achieve their full potential

- Enable all children and young people in care to achieve educational outcomes comparable to their peers at every age.
- Engage children and young people in care in a range of sporting, cultural and leisure activities

Promoting the Educational Attainment of Looked after Children :Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (March 2010)

4.4 Positive Contribution

To provide opportunities for us to listen and respond to the views and ideas of children in care and to ensure that they are involved in decision making. We also want to promote positive behaviour, being involved in the community and engaging in offending behaviour

- Ensure that children and young people in care have a voice in relation to their opinions of their own care and their views are included in wider service planning, delivery, evaluation and policy
- Ensure that children and young people in care can access wider participation opportunities, to develop self confidence, life skills and to contribute to the wider community
- Prevent offending and reduce re-offending by children and young people in care and care leavers

*Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) handbook
Roles and Responsibilities of lead Members and Directors of Children's Services
Providing Effective Advocacy Services for Children and Young People making a complaint under the Children Act 1989*

4.5 Economic Well being

We want to develop a culture of enterprise in which children and young people in care are motivated to move on to further education, training and employment supported whilst also been supported during their transition to independent living

- Support care leavers to progress their careers in continued education, employment and training
- Ensure care leavers are equipped to achieve independence particularly in the provision of long term accommodation

*Statutory guidance on securing sufficient accommodation for looked after children March 2010
The Children's Act Guidance and Regulations Volume 3: Planning transition to adulthood for care leavers (October 2010)*

5. OUR ACTION PLAN – HOW WE WILL ACHIEVE IMPROVED OUTCOMES

The supporting action plan sets out how we will achieve our shared ambitions, detailing our objectives, actions, timescales and the identified lead officer.

Appendix 3 details the measures that we will use to assess the progress that is being made. We have high expectations for our children and young people in care and these are reflected in the challenging targets that we have set ourselves.

6. REFERENCES

Care Matters: Time for Change, June 2007

www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publications (Accessed 6 June 2011)

DFE Website www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/families/childrenincare (Accessed 27 May 2011)

How do you know you are a good corporate parent: Improvement and Development Agency

www.idea.gov.uk/idk/core/page/page.do?pagelid=8330120 (Accessed 19 May 2011)

Inspections of safeguarding and looked after children's services – Framework for inspection and guidance for local authorities and partners

www.ofsted.gov.uk (Accessed 27 May 2011)

Statutory Guidance: The Roles and Responsibilities of the Lead Member for Children's Services and the Director of Children's Services

www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/families/childrenincare (Accessed 6 June 2011)

The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (2008/09)

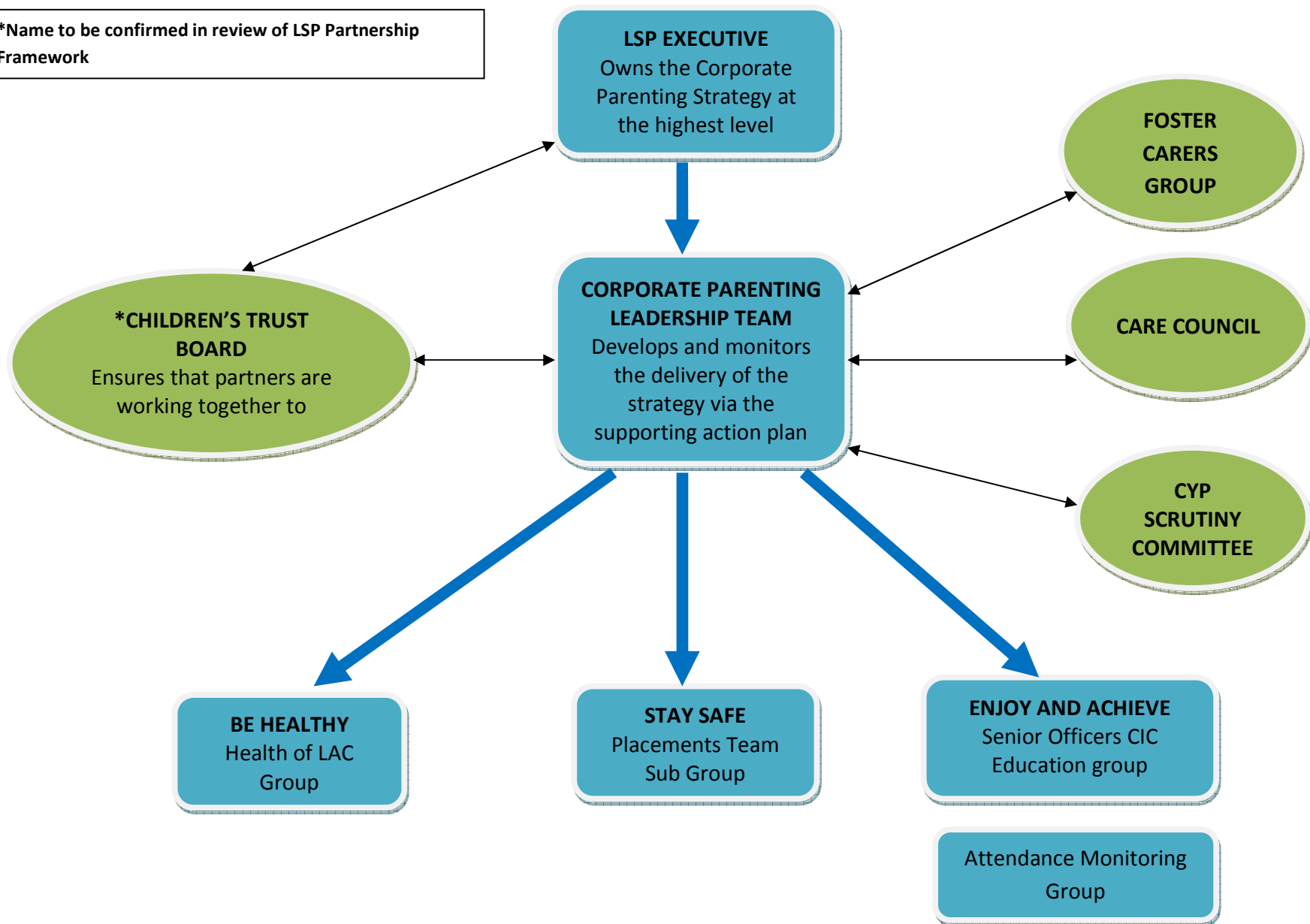
SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP 2011 – 2014)

Children in Care Placements – Commissioning Strategy and Sufficiency Duty 2010-2013

Joint Protocol for reporting Missing Children and Young People

*Name to be confirmed in review of LSP Partnership Framework



Telford and Wrekin Corporate Parents - Our pledge to children and young people in care and care leavers

Values

We Will:

1. Treat you with respect, you should also treat us with respect
2. Listen to you and take your opinions seriously
3. Treat you as individuals
4. Always be truthful with you and won't make promises that we can't keep

Keeping Safe

We Will:

5. Give you fair boundaries and help you to understand why they are there
6. Make sure that you have a good carer, who is loving, caring, kind and safe and makes sure that you are included in all activities such as holidays
7. Help you learn from mistakes and provide you with second chances and give you sound guidance and role models
8. Make sure that you have your own room, possessions and personal space

Being Healthy

We Will:

9. Make sure that you have healthy balanced meals and you can access healthy activities
10. Make sure you have information that will allow you to make healthy choices
11. Make sure that at medicals you understand what is going to happen and what is expected of you
12. Support you to access different health services when you need to

Becoming Independent

We Will:

13. Help you to gain the skills and have the confidence to look after yourself and support you with independence when the time is right for you
14. Talk to you before your 16th birthday, about your options. We will support you to leave care at your pace before your 18th birthday, with a support package that meets your individual needs
15. Support you to make informed choices about your education, particularly with your options for GCSEs and your future career path
16. Make sure that you have your personal documents such as birth certificates and passports before you are 16

Enjoy and Achieve

We Will:

17. Make sure that you have a place at a good school or nursery and if you get behind in education that you can access extra tuition if you would like to
18. Encourage you to try new hobbies and experiences and continue things that you are good at
19. Make sure that you have access to a computer and internet to support your schooling (if appropriate)
20. Celebrate your birthday, special occasions and achievements with you

Make a Positive Contribution

We Will:

21. Make sure that you can access good quality information about being in care and help you to understand decisions that are made about you and who makes those decisions
22. Keep you informed of all changes that affect you and include your views and opinions on how services are shaped
23. Make sure that you are consulted about when, where and who you would like to attend your meetings, and that at your meetings you are listened to
24. Tell you when you have done something well, particularly in your reviews

Contact

We Will:

25. Make every effort to give you contact which is regular and of good quality, unless it is not reasonably practical or unsafe for you to do so
26. Make sure that you have opportunities to get to know, and when needed, say goodbye to, family friends and adults that are working with you
27. Try and make sure that we don't change your social worker or reviewing officer, unless it is unavoidable or you transfer to a different social work team
28. Make sure that your social worker spends quality time with you and doesn't just see you at meetings



Appendix 3

A summary of the performance information that we will use to judge whether we have improved outcomes

Being Healthy	Under 18 conception rate
	Substance and alcohol misuse
	Emotional and behavioral health of looked after children
Staying Safe	Stability of placements – number of moves
	Stability of placement – length of placement
Enjoy and Achieve	Looked after children reaching level 4 in maths at KS2
	Looked after children reaching level 4 in English at KS2
	Looked after children achieving 5A*-C GCS's or equivalent at KS4 including English and maths
	Looked after Children attendance at school
Positive Contribution	Communicating views at LAC Reviews
	FTE and re-offending rates
Economic Wellbeing	Percentage of care leavers at 19 in suitable accommodation
	Care Leavers in education, employment or training
Cross Cutting	Continuity of Social Worker

Appendix 4

Who does what for Children in Care and Care Leavers in Telford and Wrekin – **update following restructures**

Education Support Service	
Leisure and Fun Project	
LAC Nurse	
Therapy and Lifestyle Worker	
16 + team	
Leaving Care Youth Worker	
Review and Care Core Group	
Safeguarding Advisory Service	
Assessment and Case Management Teams	
Family Placements team	
Complaints	
Rights and Representation	
Independent Vision project	
Helpdesk	

REPORT TO CYP SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Dated:	19 th September 2011		
Author:	Vivianne McKay	Tel	388892
Job title:	Group Manager, Procurement, Placements & Commissioning		
E-mail address:	Vivianne.mckay2@telford.gov.uk		

Title of Report: SHORT BREAKS PROVISION DISABLED CHILDREN

1. Purpose

- To inform the Committee of the Local Authority’s statutory duty in relation to short breaks
- To share the Cabinet report “Short breaks Statement” with the Committee

2. Our Duties

From 1 April 2011 new duties on local authorities came into force about the provision of short breaks.

The first set of duties relates to Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations and Guidance and the second describes the new duty on local authorities to provide short breaks.

The short breaks duty requires every Local Authority (LA) to “provide services designed to assist individuals who provide care for disabled children to continue to do so, or to do so more effectively by providing them with breaks from caring” Section 25 Children and Young Persons Act 2008.

Every LA must provide breaks from caring for carers of disabled children and a range of short breaks. Every LA must prepare and publish a short breaks services statement by 1st October 2011 and consult in preparing the statement.

2.1. Who must be provided with a short breaks service?

Short breaks should be provided to people with caring responsibility for a disabled child or children living in their local area in order to:

- a) allow them to continue to care; and/or
- b) to allow them to care more effectively

2.2 What must be offered?

We must provide a range of short breaks including:

- day time care in or outside the child’s home;

- overnight care in or outside the child's home;
- educational and leisure activities;

which must be available in the evenings, at weekends, during the school holidays. The range should include supported access to universal services and specialist services for children with multiple and profound disabilities

2.3 Our capacity to meet this duty

Telford & Wrekin Council has allocated £685,100 of revenue funding this financial year from the Early Intervention and Prevention Grant to enable us to meet our duty to provide a range of short breaks. This funding is used to commission a wide range of services which meet the criteria relating to the short breaks duty and which have been developed through a needs led commissioning strategy involving the engagement of parents and carers and children and partners. The funding also supports workforce development to ensure that staff providing short breaks to disabled children are appropriately trained to support disabled children. It is also used to ensure that families are appropriately informed regarding short breaks provision (i.e. the ican2 newsletter). This year we have focussed on improving inclusion of disabled children for example during Culturefest, filling gaps in demand i.e. extension of Club 17 and piloting bespoke packages of care for children on the Autistic spectrum.

This year the DfE has awarded the Authority capital funding to support short breaks and £200,000 has been allocated to improve access and facilities to disabled children in the town park where they and their families can enjoy short breaks.

It is important to note that although the duty to provide short breaks falls on the LA, our partners, particularly Health, provide short breaks to support children with complex health needs and life limiting conditions (for example hospices and community nursing respite).

All commissioned services are reviewed on a regular and ongoing basis and feedback is sought from parents and children using those services.

As outlined in the attached Cabinet report (attachment 1) we are legally obliged to publish a short breaks statement and in preparing that Statement we must have consulted carers. It is intended that the Statement identified in that report be published in varying accessible formats by 1st October 2011 across the Borough. To that end our Corporate Communications Team will be formatting the statement into a leaflet publication on websites and our Children's Engagement Team are working on a child friendly version of the statement for publication and distribution.

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL
REPORT FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE
CABINET: 22ND September 2011
TITLE: SHORT BREAKS STATEMENT
REPORT OF GROUP MANAGER, PROCUREMENT, PLACEMENTS & COMMISSIONING

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

Short Breaks services have been prioritised as an area for development and growth over recent years and a comprehensive programme of short breaks services is now provided for families of disabled children in the Borough. The Council now has a duty to publish a Short Breaks Services Statement as set out in the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011.

A Short Breaks Statement has been worked up as presented in this report. With Council approval the Statement would be ready for publication by October 2011 as required as set out in the Regulations.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

To seek members endorsement of the Short Breaks Statement for Publication by October 2011

3. SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Priority Plan objective(s)?	
	Yes	<p>CYP PRIORITY PLAN OBJECTIVES:</p> <p>Outcome 1: Children and young people have healthy and positive lifestyles</p> <p>Outcome 2: Vulnerable children and young people are kept safe from harm and neglect</p> <p>Cross cutting CYP High level action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring together a range of services to support children and young people with SEN, severe or complex behavioural needs and disabilities
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Disabled Children</i> • <i>Parents & Carers of Disabled Children</i> • <i>Siblings of Disabled children</i>
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	1 st October 2011	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	The outturn cost in 2010/11 of providing short breaks was around £700k. The current year budget is also at this level and therefore the opportunities for short breaks afforded by the Council should be met from within budgeted resources in 2011/12. The determination of future year resources will be subject to the availability of funding, as determined by the Council when establishing its overall medium term budget strategy.
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	Section 25 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 placed a statutory duty upon local authorities to provide short breaks. Section 25, The Care Planning, Placement and Case Review Regulations 2010, the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2011 and Short Breaks statutory guidance came into force on 1 st April 2011.

		Regulation 5 of the 2011 Regulations requires the Local Authority to prepare and publish a “short breaks statement” for carers by 1 st October 2011 setting out the information prescribed ,and to keep the same under review. The Local Authority must have regard to the views of carers in their area when preparing and revising the statement.
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	No	
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	<i>Borough-wide impact</i>

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4. INFORMATION

- 4.1 Short Breaks is the term used for a range of services provided for families to give carers of disabled children a break from caring and for children to take part in fun activities and have new experiences away from home. This covers a wide range of provision from universal (open to all without the need for any assessment or specialist support) through to specialist (for example hospices and overnight residential care).

Telford & Wrekin Council and its partners have achieved national recognition in the development of the short breaks programme for disabled children and their families to achieve the following outcome:

“All children with disabilities in Telford & Wrekin to be given the choice to access appropriate high quality short breaks to maximise their potential and improve the quality of life for them and their families” (OBA meeting with Parents July 2009)

- 4.2 Section 25 of the Children and Young Persons Act requires local authorities to provide short breaks for families with disabled children. Regulations relating to this duty which came into force on 1 April 2011 require each local authority to produce a short breaks service statement by October 2011 so that families know what services are available, the eligibility criteria for these services and how the range of services is designed to meet the needs of families with disabled children in the Borough.
- 4.3 With the support of the Aiming Strategic Partnership Group and in consultation with parents & carers, children & young people, colleagues and other stakeholders we have prepared a Short Breaks Statement which meets the regulatory requirements (Appendix 1: Statement – Short Breaks Services).

The intention is that the Short Breaks Statement will be published on the Council's website and the dedicated site for short breaks: the ICan2 website and our partners will link it to their websites. It will also be made available through various information points across the Borough including the information hub at the integrated disabled children's centre, the family information service and distributed to children and families in pdf leaflet format through the Ican2 newsletter and the parents' forums.

Our community engagement officer is working with a group of young people to design a condensed and young people friendly version of the Short Breaks Statement which should be ready for October 2011.

4.4 As set out in the Short Breaks Statement, the services described in the Statement will be subject to ongoing review and the Statement itself will be reviewed at the end of January 2012.

5. **PREVIOUS MINUTES**

N/A

6. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendix 1: Statement – Short Breaks Services

Report prepared by: Vivianne McKay
Group Manager, Procurement, Placements & Commissioning
Tel: 01952 388892

Statement - Short Break Services

Short Breaks Outcome:

"All children with disabilities in Telford & Wrekin to be given the choice to access appropriate high quality short breaks to maximise their potential and improve the quality of life for them and their families" (OBA meeting with Parents July 2009)

Background

This statement has been prepared based upon a consultative approach to short breaks provision. A three year programme of development involving parents and carers, children & young people and stakeholders preceded the run up to the requirement to prepare this statement. That development process shaped the delivery of services, the workforce requirements; information and communication processes and products and range of provision to meet local identified need.

Section 25 of the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 requires local authorities to provide short breaks for families with disabled children. Regulations relating to this duty which came into force on 1 April 2011 require each local authority to produce a short breaks service statement so that families know what services are available, the eligibility criteria for these services and how the range of services is designed to meet the needs of families with disabled children in the Borough

How we prepared this statement

This statement has been prepared with the support of the Aiming Strategic Partnership Group which drives forward the strategic plans for disabled children across the partnerships in the Borough. The Council is committed to the short breaks programme as part of its co-operative approach of bringing together services and delivering services that matter to people and develop our community.

The lead officer responsible for preparing this statement is the Group Manager, Procurement, Placements & Commissioning who takes a lead in developing and commissioning short breaks on behalf of the Local Authority. The statement was subject to consultation with partners including the parents and carers forum over the summer of 2011 and will be published by October 2011 following agreement by the Council. The statement will be placed on the Council website, circulated to partners and we will ensure that families are made aware of how to access the Statement.

How will we review this statement?

As required, this statement will be regularly monitored at the Aiming High Strategic Partnership Group (or its successor group) at which Telford Parent Carer Council and the disabled children's parents' forum "Parents Opening Doors" (PODs) is represented. A formal review of this statement will be scheduled for no later than 31 January 2012 to

coincide with any future consultation processes, financial and service planning and commissioning cycles to ensure that we proceed with a valid mandate.

What are short breaks services?

Short Breaks is the term used for a range of services provided for families to give carers of disabled children a break from caring and for children to take part in fun activities and have new experiences away from home. This covers a wide range of provision from universal (open to all without the need for any assessment or specialist support) through to specialist (for example hospices and overnight residential care).

Definition of disability and access to short breaks services

The definition of disability that applies to the short breaks regulations is the definition of disability from the Children Act 1989 where a child is disabled if:

“he is blind, deaf or dumb or suffers from mental disorder of any kind or is substantially and permanently handicapped by illness, injury or congenital deformity or such other disability as may be prescribed”

Children and young people are eligible for short breaks if they have a physical or learning disability, a hearing or visual impairment. It includes children with autism and Asperger’s Syndrome and children who may have challenging behaviour as a result of their learning disability. It also includes children who have complex needs and who may have palliative, life limiting or a life- threatening condition.

Each child is however a unique individual, with their own personality, needs and strengths and wishes and feelings. They are entitled to make the same choices as any other child. In addition family circumstances vary and we aim to ensure that short breaks provision to individual children reflects their particular needs.

We know from talking to disabled children that the one thing they want most is to be able to do the same things as their friends or non-disabled peers. In the development and consultation processes which resulted in the production of a strategy for short breaks we adopted the ICan2 brand for services commissioned with specific short break funding. ICan2 sums up our approach: all short breaks services aim to enable disabled children to choose and enjoy the activities they want to do just like anyone else. We aim to make the full range of leisure activities both sport and culture accessible to all children in Telford and Wrekin.

Principles

In Telford & Wrekin all families with a disabled child are able to receive support. Each child is an individual and family circumstances vary. Support will therefore be proportional to their needs. We aim to encourage children and parents and carers to express their needs as they see them to be.

Only when discussion is needed with professionals to decide the best form the support should take, will assessment processes be required. Choice and control is at the heart of Short Break services and we are committed to developing a wide range of activities so that children and young people can decide what they are interested in and parents can

receive the most effective form of support to meet their needs. Short Break services are designed to promote a disabled child's development and be enjoyable and fun. In addition parents can enjoy a well-earned break.

Services will be:

- safe
- run and supported by suitably trained staff
- suitable for the child or young person
- influenced by young people themselves
- reliable

Range of provision

We know from what we have been told is that children want lots of activities to join in with like their siblings and peers and activities which are close to their homes and give them new opportunities and experiences. As a result a wide range of provision is available which is flexible and child centred and a flow chart has been compiled to identify how provision can be accessed. This flow chart can be accessed via the following link:

www.ican2.org.uk/downloads/Access%20to%20Short%20Breaks%20Flow%20Chart.pdf

Full information about the range of activities for disabled children may be found in the regular iCan2 newsletter; on the Ican2 website www.ican2.org.uk the Council website www.telford.gov.uk and from the disabled children's information officer who you can contact on 01952 567300 and are based at the information hub at Stepping Stones Centre, Malinslee, Telford. Information is also available on a range of services from the Family Information Service.

Level One - Universal provision

Many activities in the Borough are open to any child including disabled children for example sports and leisure activities, child minders, groups at children's centres, after school clubs etc. Any family can choose to access these services. Some children may not be able to access these services for a variety of reasons and we are committed to overcoming these barriers wherever resources allow. These may relate to the need for someone to accompany the child or the level of skill and training required for staff to care for the child safely.

Universal services

- After school clubs and holiday clubs
- Sports & leisure centres (a disability keyworker is designated for Council leisure centres)
http://www.telford.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2990/leisure_centre_access
- Youth clubs
- Children centre activities
- Nurseries (Some of these have received specific training in relation to disabilities and have disability resources available)
- Childminders (some of these have been specifically trained to care for children with disabilities)

- Polo (Parents Offering Leisure Opportunities) whole family breaks
- Arthog and Arthog at Shortwood (outdoor activities and education)
<http://arthog.co.uk/>

Universal plus services

- Ican2 sports & leisure activities (computer clubs, sports activities, hydro pool sessions, swimming, sea scooters, specialist go karts and bikes, martial arts, skiing, bowling, Wii games)
- Kreative Kids (Taiko drumming, dance, stories, arts and sculpture, drama & creative movement, music)
- Blue Eyed Soul (dance)
- Club 17 (specialist youth club 11 – 25 yrs)
- Access to Activities (A2A) (day trips and plays activities and cinema outings)
- Sensory Inclusion Facilitator (visually impaired children)

Parents and children have expressed difficulties in engaging well with some groups and activities for example football clubs and youth groups. Those difficulties are often due to a perceived lack of awareness of behavior issues which can impact upon the ability to effective engagement with the group/volunteers/co-ordinators. To support children to access community groups we have set up a small grants fund this year which is being offered to voluntary and charitable groups in the local community. This fund will be co-ordinated by the voluntary sector with a panel comprising parent representatives and Council officers and can be used to enable easier access to those groups through funding for training & equipment etc. The PODs group is also considering the development of a “passport” to provide universal activity co-ordinators with an awareness of the needs of disabled children.

Level Two - Additional support to enable access to activities

Where barriers exist the Short Breaks Programme offers support designed to overcome them. Additional support can be accessed through the Programme using the Common Assessment Framework to identify the need and the most suitable solution. As with any child where a need has been identified, the CAF may be supported by a Team Around the Child meeting (TAC). Advice may be given by the Integrated Service for Disabled Children at this stage. Support will be made available for a specific agreed period, and will be subject to monitoring and review arrangements. This is to ensure that provision reflects changing need. A Support Worker may for example be required only for the period while a young person is getting used to a new activity and the provider learns how best to meet the young person’s needs.

Additional support services:

- Support workers supplied via agencies or in house
- Direct Payments
- Outreach service (Action for Children)
- Summer Playscheme (Bridge Special School)

Level Three - Specialist services

Some forms of provision require a higher level of assessment and this will be done whenever a Lead Professional or parents consider that the child's needs are more complex. A Social Worker in the Integrated Service will undertake an assessment using the Children Act 1989. This will take into account the needs of parents and other carers and balance these with an understanding of the best way to meet the child's needs. Overnight care in a Residential or Family-based setting will require this level of assessment to determine the type and level of care which is most appropriate. For children with high level health needs an assessment will be completed for specialist nursing home based respite care. Access to Hospice Care may also be considered for this group of children or those with a life limiting condition (no specialist assessment is required in this case).

Specialist services:

- Children's Community Nursing Respite service.
www.ican2.org.uk/downloads/Community%20Children's%20Nursing%20Service.pdf
- Stars Overnight residential breaks (Action for Children)
- Mencap Overnight residential breaks
- Shared Care Service (support overnight or day care with approved foster carers)
- Independent residential short breaks provision (spot placements)
- Hope House Hospice & outreach www.hopehouse.org.uk
- Acorns Hospice www.acorns.org.uk

Assessment

The level of assessment will be proportional to the need and we will always use information already available rather than subject a family to repeated un-necessary information giving. We will always encourage parents to tell us what would be the most helpful form of support, and we will ensure that support is available at a time when it is most needed. When an assessment by a Social Worker or a Health Professional is needed, this will involve a meeting with the family and other professionals who know the child or young person. Providers of care may, for example need to learn how to look after the child correctly in relation to complex medical needs or manual handling.

Resources panel

A panel of people from different services who provide support to disabled children with complex needs meets regularly. The group looks at the best way of providing and paying for short breaks for children with the highest level of need. The group knows about the availability of services as well having information about individual children's needs. When there may be a gap before the preferred choice of service is available the group can offer a higher level of support designed to meet the agreed outcomes on an interim basis.

The group can give approval where Direct Payments are agreed as the preferred option for purchasing a service.

Transport

Support may be offered towards transport where the assessment considers this will be helpful. Although the number of breaks will not be restricted from that offered in the Plan, the number of occasions when transport is provided may be limited and family members may be expected to arrange transport themselves beyond an agreed level. The Panel will consider requests for transport. It is acknowledged that the provision of transport may contribute greatly to the effectiveness of a Short Breaks service. For this reason transport will not be restricted where it is used to access residential overnight breaks.

Workforce development and safe recruitment

The workforce needs of individuals supporting children on short breaks have been identified and all service providers are expected to engage and participate in relevant training to safely and effectively manage and cater for the needs of all children. Where external services are commissioned under a contract, then the contract contains terms and conditions relating to the training and development needs of staff/volunteers and this is reviewed and monitored on a regular basis. Equally, safe recruitment procedures and policies are required to ensure the well being of children in the care of independent agencies and local authority. A workforce development strategy which includes training for carers of disabled children is in place at the Council and offers training opportunities which are also open to our contracted providers.

Equipment

Specialist equipment has been made available to numerous leisure and community centres in order to meet the needs of disabled children and young people. Investment in this equipment has enabled children to join in with activities that would previously have been inaccessible for example by the use of specialist ski equipment and toboggans, specialist bikes and wheelchairs, adapted minibuses and specialist canoes, dance mats and multi media equipment. Individuals using this equipment have expressed benefits such as:

"My son is now able to go down ski slope and toboggan with an instructor and loves every minute of it. We have also got him out of his wheelchair and is now peddling a go-kart on his own around the track and there was no way 6 months ago he would have been able to move a go-kart using his legs but now he can actually go round the track".

Charges

Some short breaks services may apply a charge to the provision, for example sports and leisure services or for trips. However all children and young people will be provided with a free flex card which enables them to access short breaks and other mainstream sports and leisure services and facilities at reduced rates. A family may also choose to make arrangements themselves for transport above the level offered for which they would be expected to self fund.

How do we consult with service users and review service provision?

Universal services can be accessed informally based entirely on the choice of the young person and family. Where additional support through the Short Breaks programme is provided, it is important to keep track of this. Monitoring involves a periodic discussion with the child, the family and the provider to ensure the service is still suitable, and that everyone is entirely happy. Some forms of service, for example overnight breaks, which are provided on a statutory basis involve more formal reviews as required by legislation. The purpose, however is exactly the same. Reviews may mean the service continues in the same form, or can involve a change in the level or frequency or even a complete change to a different service. Reviews also enable a check on the quality of the service, because we insist that all types of short break are safe, reliable and involve high standards of practice.

The majority of short breaks services have been developed and informed by a commissioning strategy which analysed the numbers of children with disabilities in the Borough, the needs and wishes of families, carers assessments and gaps in provision. The short breaks programme and the services developed as part of the preceding three year development programme were subject to a service review which involved consultation with families and stakeholders via questionnaires, forums and regular and ongoing feedback through service providers and contract review data and meetings.

A young people's disability forum is supported to hear the voice of the child in the shaping of services and the parents forum PODs is a key partner in the development of services and represents the voice of parents on many strategic groups, engagement sessions and via their own forum events and activities. Contact: www.podstelford.org

Complaints

Because we are committed to working in partnership with families to enable high levels of choice of service, we hope that there will usually be high levels of satisfaction. Complaints will however be investigated promptly and openly, and may involve the provider's own system to dealing with complaints. We encourage families to help us to design the right services and we will consult the Parents' Forum (PODS) about these matters. We want our Short Breaks Services to continue to improve and all comments, positive or negative will be used for this purpose.

In the event of any queries or comments in relation to this Statement please contact the information officer at ican2information@telford.gov.uk or call 01952 570402

Dated: September 2011

Review Date: January 2012

Reading Advice: If you find this document difficult to read we can supply it in a format better suited to your needs contact us on 01952 567300



**Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee
Forward Plan 2011/12**

MEETING DATE	AGENDA ITEM	LEAD MEMBER/ OFFICER	ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES
Monday, 19 th September Scrutiny Meeting Room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Parenting Strategy • BSF Programme Report for information and further questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Breaks for Disabled Children 	Paul Watling/ Karen Perry Guy Kershaw	Damien Madine
Thursday, 20 th October Scrutiny Meeting Room	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on Phase 2 Children's Service Review • Child Poverty 	Clive Jones Clive Jones	
Thursday 1 st December Scrutiny Meeting Room			
January			
February			
March			
April			
Forward items			
Youth Services			
Corporate Parenting – items to be identified – suggestions include Members role, foster carers, social workers, safeguarding, contact issues for CIC, placement stability, education attainment, Corporate Parenting Strategy)			
2 meetings with children in care or care leavers			

MEETING DATE	AGENDA ITEM	LEAD MEMBER/ OFFICER	ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES
	School Improvement Team – directory of services		
	Child Poverty		
	CYP Service Review		
	BSF Programme – key decisions / milestones		