

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**CABINET
MONDAY 19 MARCH 2001 AT 10.00 AM**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
MONDAY 19 MARCH 2001 AT 2.15 PM**

Agenda Item No.

7

HERTFORDSHIRE'S TEENAGE PREGNANCY STRATEGY

Report of Director of Social Services

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1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To agree the content of the Hertfordshire Strategy (attached to this report), which has already been approved by the Health Authority Executive Group and the Joint Commissioning Board. This report also takes into account members' recommendations from the Student Services Panel which includes information re data collection/availability and parental involvement.
- 1.2 To agree proposals for the implementation of the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy for Hertfordshire which follows the DfEE Teenage Pregnancy Unit's guidelines and sets out the goals and targets for the next ten years.
- 1.3 The Strategy to be signed by the Chief Executives of the Health Authorities and Hertfordshire County Council and submitted to the Department of Health by 30th March 2001.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The Hertfordshire Teenage Pregnancy Strategy applies to the whole county and sets out a plan of action to meet by 2010 the Government's two goals:

- To reduce the rate of teenage conceptions by 50% among the under 18s by 2010 and to have established a downward trend in the rate of under 16s conceptions by 2010.
 - To get more teenage parents into education, training or employment, to reduce their risk of long term social exclusion.
- 2.2 It is a ten year Strategy produced by the Health Authorities and the Local Authority in partnership with stakeholders.
- 2.3 The national rate for total conceptions (per 1000) in the under 18s was 45.5 in 1997 and in Hertfordshire the rate was 32. There are some local districts which have higher rates than the countywide rate. The two districts that have the highest conception rate in East and North Hertfordshire Health Authority are Stevenage and Welwyn/Hatfield. In West Hertfordshire Health Authority, the two districts that have the highest conception rates are Watford and Dacorum. The strategy will focus its efforts on prioritising these higher rate districts although some work will be county wide.
- 2.4 Hertfordshire has to achieve a 45% reduction of its current rate of conceptions (32) within the ten year period in the under 18s i.e. to achieve a rate of 17.6.
- 2.5 The strategy reviews the work that was done in March 2000 by both Health Authorities. It highlights the priority areas to be addressed as a result of the initial and subsequent reviews. It sets out an action plan, focusing on the first 3 years, which incorporates these priorities and which meets the guidelines set out by the Teenage Pregnancy Unit.
- 2.6 The key sections in the action plan are:
 - Mapping of Services
 - Consultation with Young People
 - Media and Communications
 - Better Prevention
 - Better Contraception
 - Better Support for Pregnant Teenagers and Teenage Parents.
- 2.7 The strategy is jointly led by the two Health Authorities and Hertfordshire County Council. There is a strategy group whose membership comprises of a variety of partnership agencies both voluntary and statutory who have worked together to develop and write the Strategy. The group will continue to meet to oversee the implementation of the strategy, to develop the Strategy beyond year 3 and to ensure that targets are met. Focus groups will also be set up to ensure that the views of young people, parents and key organisations inform the development of the Strategy.
- 2.8 The Strategy is a working document and the Priorities and Action Plans will be revised annually.

3. Conclusions

- 3.1 The Tackling Teenage Pregnancy Strategy is a Government priority and therefore needs to be taken into account in all strategic planning documents for children and young people.
- 3.2 The Strategy has implications for policies and working practices in the Youth Service, Corporate Parenting, Family Planning Units, Primary Care Groups and the school Sex and Relationship Education curriculum.
- 3.3 In order to implement this Strategy and meet the required targets an Action Plan has been put in place which will require close partnership working, robust monitoring and review.