

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 16 OCTOBER 2002 AT 10.30AM**

Agenda Item No.

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THE CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES SERVICE PLAN 2003/04

Report of the Director of Children, Schools and Families

Author: - Diana Searle, Assistant Director: Development Division
Tel: 01992 555908
Executive Member: - Robert Gordon

1. Purpose of the report

To invite the Scrutiny Committee to note the publication of the draft Children, Schools and Families Plan 2003/04 which has now been issued for public consultation.

2. Summary

The CSF Plan 2003/04 brings together the requirements of the:

- Education Development Plan
- Quality Protects Management Action Plan
- Early Years Development and Childcare Plan
- Youth Justice Plan
- Adult and Community Learning Plan

plus many other associated plans and strategies collectively designed to improve the opportunities for and achievement of children and young people.

The consultation version of the 2003/04 plan has been developed through a stakeholder workshop held in June 2002 involving department staff, schools and key partner organisations in both the public and voluntary sector. As part of the consultation process there will be a series of stakeholder conferences, and Strategic Area workshops taking place in October, designed to encourage feedback thereby further strengthening the content of the plan.

(The consultation will end on 22 November 22)

3. Conclusions

Members of the Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider the content of the draft Plan 2003/04 – individual copies have been issued to all members.

The Scrutiny Committee will consider the revised plan, following amendments from the consultation, at their meeting on 22 January 2003.

4. Background

- 4.1 During the first year of CSF, a strategic plan was drawn up, bringing together all the major service priorities for children. It covers the period April 2002 to March 2007 and is updated annually. The CSF Plan 2002/03 was approved at the County Council meeting in February 2002 and has become the central planning device within the CSF Service. It has been recognised nationally for the way in which it brings together the wide range of planning requirements so that all the energy and resources of the service are focused on our priorities for children.
- 4.2 The structure of the plan for 2003/04 is as in the existing plan; there are eight Strategic Areas – a small but significant change is proposed for the title of Strategic Area 3.

The wording in the 2002/03 plan is

‘Using Early Years services and prevention to help children succeed’

As a result of feedback at the initial conference, the title of Area 3 in the draft 2003/04 plan has been amended to read: -

‘Using prevention, early intervention and early years services to help children succeed’

The targets that relate to that strategic area are at the end of each chapter.

- 4.3 Each strategic area has a list of priorities. The priorities are similar to those set out in our current 2002/03 plan. There has been some re-wording where a change of focus was needed within an existing priority. There were also some changed priorities where our audit process showed that a different kind of action was needed to progress towards achieving the target.
- 4.4 In order to assist the Scrutiny Committee, a chart is attached (Appendix 1) which lists the priorities contained in the 2002/03 plan and the proposed priorities for the 2003/04 plan with a brief explanation about the reasoning where there has been a change.

Associated with each priority is a set of actions. These are the things we are proposing to do in 2003/04 and are entirely different from the actions in the current 2002/03 plan

5. Consultation Process

- 5.1 A summary of the draft plan has been issued to all CSF staff, all Hertfordshire schools and to all CSF stakeholders; a response form is enclosed with each individual copy of the draft plan that is issued.

A full copy of the draft plan can be viewed on

www.HertsDirect.org/draftcsfplan0304

A response facility is signposted from this site.

- 5.2 The plan will be discussed at Cabinet Panel meetings, Management Partnership Groups and other major strategic planning meetings, e.g. Area Child Protection Committee, held during the consultation period (see Appendix 2).
- 5.3 Throughout October, there will be a series of stakeholder conferences plus a number of individual strategic area workshops focusing on specific issues within the plan. The list of events is attached as Appendix 3.
- 5.4 We will be consulting with young people about the content of the plan, using existing young people's networks, school councils etc. There will be a consultation event specifically aimed at young people taking place on 3 November at which we will be consulting with representative groups of young people utilising a variety of approaches.

The closing date for the consultation process is Friday 22 November.

6. Financial Implications

The work set out in the draft plan will need to be funded by County Council budgets and central government grants (e.g. Standards Fund, Quality protects). Allocation of resources to support the draft Plan is part of the preparation for the 2003/04 budget. This may involve changes to some of the tasks or to the scale of proposed actions. Details within the plan will also need to be considered alongside some of the current discussion of significant strategies affecting children and young people e.g. Youth Strategy, 'Behaviour and its effect on Achievement'.

Background information referred to by the author:

Children, Schools and Families Service Plan 2002/03

Children, Schools and Families Service Plan 2003/04: Draft for Consultation