

**HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL  
CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**WEDNESDAY 15 OCTOBER 2003 at 10.00 AM**

Agenda Item No.

**1**

**CHILDREN SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES SERVICE PLAN 2004/5**

*Report of the Director of Children, Schools and Families*

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Executive Member: Robert Gordon

**1. Purpose of Report**

- To seek comments about the content of draft Children Schools and Families Service Plan (CSF Plan) 2004/5, attached as an Annex.
- To inform Members about the timetable for the consultation and approval process, attached as Appendix 1.

**2. Summary of Report**

- 2.1 2004/5 will be the third year of the Children Schools and Families Service Plan (CSF Plan). The Plan for 2004/5 keeps to the tried and tested formula, although we have taken advantage of the new planning freedoms accorded to "excellent" authorities by moving to a more comprehensive CSF Plan. This will provide a framework for all of our work, including core activities as well as developmental work. A chart is attached at Appendix 2 which compares the priorities contained in the 2003/4 Plan and the proposed priorities for the 2004/5 Plan.
- 2.2 The Consultation Draft has been developed through a stakeholder workshop held in July 2003 involving department staff, schools and key partner organisations in both the public and voluntary sector. It has been issued to CSF staff, all Hertfordshire schools and to all CSF stakeholders. In response to last year's feedback, the consultation event process has been streamlined this year, as outlined in section 5. The closing date for consultation is Friday 14 November 2003.

**3. Conclusion**

Members are invited to provide initial comments on the content of the plan. They will receive a further report on 21 January 2004, which will include feedback from the consultation, as part of the process leading to approval of the Plan at Cabinet and County Council in February 2004.

## **4. Background**

- 4.1 2004/5 will be the third year of the Children Schools and Families Service Plan (CSF Plan). During the first two years of CSF, a strategic plan was drawn up, bringing together all the major service plans for children. The CSF Plan 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. The Plan for 2004/5 keeps to the tried and tested formula, although there have been some refinements to take into account the changing national and local situation with regard to strategic planning.
- 4.2 The CSF Plan 2004/5: Draft for Consultation is attached as an Annex. The overall structure of the plan is as in previous years with eight Strategic Areas, which include priorities and actions designed to ensure that CSF continues to progress towards achieving its published targets. Each Strategic Area begins with an introduction that outlines the reasoning underlying the priorities it contains. In order to assist Members, a chart is attached (Appendix 2) which compares the priorities contained in the 2003/4 Plan and the proposed priorities for the 2004/5 Plan, with a brief explanation about the reasoning for keeping or changing them.
- 4.3 Under the new freedoms for Authorities rated "excellent" under the Government's Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) process, the only Plans still required by central government are:
- Children's Fund Plan
  - Connexions Plan
  - CAMHS Development Strategy
  - School Organisation Plan

The CSF Board has concluded that we should take advantage of these freedoms by moving to a more comprehensive CSF Plan. This will provide a framework for all of our work, including core activities as well as developmental work. Accordingly, this year for the first time, each Priority Area begins with a list of tasks that outline the core services we provide under that area, before going on to list a series of development actions and tasks for next year.

## **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 The Consultation Draft has been developed through a stakeholder workshop held in July 2003 involving department staff, schools and key partner organisations in both the public and voluntary sector. It has been issued to CSF staff, all Hertfordshire schools and to all CSF stakeholders. Response forms are included with the draft and an on-line electronic response facility is also provided. The closing date for consultation is Friday 14 November 2003. The Plan will be revised in the light of consultation and will be presented to Cabinet and the County Council in February 2004.

5.2 In response to last year's feedback, the consultation event process has been streamlined this year. This entails having a smaller number of specific consultation events and a greater use of existing panels and partnership groups to seek feedback. Five major consultation events are being held during October and November, which are listed in the timetable in Appendix 1:

- Two general events for strategic partners, schools and other major stakeholders. To maximise stakeholder input, these events are focussing on key themes rather than specific strategic areas.
- As in previous years there is a specific event for voluntary and community organisations that also updates them on the voluntary sector strategy and the HCC Funding Prospectus for next year, which was issued in September. This event helps to build the voluntary sector's understanding of the connection between funding and CSF priorities.
- New this year is an event for Black and Ethnic Minority groups and stakeholders who work closely with them. This is in keeping with our voluntary sector strategy to get closer to these groups and also to help us ensure that we fulfil recommendations of the Race Relations Amendment Act reviews.
- As last year we will hold a "Make It Happen" event for children and young people.

Members' participation is welcomed at any of these events.

5.3 In addition, the consultation draft is being presented to a series of Member panels and stakeholder partnerships throughout the Autumn. Some of the panels are focussing on specific strategic areas. These are also indicated in the timetable in Appendix 1.

## **6. Financial Implications**

6.1 The work set out in the draft plan will be funded by County Council budgets and central government grants. Allocation of resources to support the Plan is part of the preparation for the 2004/5 budget. This may involve changes to some of the tasks or to the scale of proposed actions.

6.2 The outcome of the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review means that HCC will face an even more challenging financial situation next year than this. Although we will continue to undertake new development activities next year, we also need to think carefully about the prioritising of non-school resources and ensure that we are doing things as efficiently as possible.

## **7. Rural Implications**

None

## **8. Conclusion**

Members are invited to provide initial comments on the content of the plan. The Scrutiny Committee will receive a further report on 21 January 2004, which will include feedback from the consultation, as part of the process leading to approval of the Plan at Cabinet and County Council in February 2004.

If you would like to know more about the issues referred to in this report please contact Andrew Wellington (Tel: 01992 556980)

### **Background papers**

*CSF Plan 2004/5: Draft for Consultation - attached as an Annex*

*CSF Plan 2003/4*

**The CSF Plan 2004/05**  
**Autumn 2003 – Spring 2004 Timetable**

<b><u>Process</u></b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Consultation events</b></li> </ul> <p>Conferences:</p> <p>General Stakeholder Event after CYPSP (Members, Schools, Governors, Health Colleagues, Business Links etc)</p> <p>Event with Black and Minority Ethnic Groups and Stakeholders</p> <p>General Stakeholder Event (Members, Schools, Governors, Health Colleagues, Business Links etc)</p> <p>Event with Voluntary Organisations</p> <p>“Make it Happen” Event for Young People</p>	<p>Oct-Nov</p> <p>Monday 6<sup>th</sup> Oct 03</p> <p>Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> Oct 03</p> <p>Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> Oct 03</p> <p>Monday 20<sup>th</sup> Oct 03</p> <p>Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> Nov 03</p>	<p>Fielder Centre, Hatfield 7.30 – 9.00 p.m.</p> <p>Wheathampstead Development Centre 6.30 – 8.30 p.m.</p> <p>Wheathampstead Development Centre 5.00 – 6.30 p.m.</p> <p>Wheathampstead Development Centre, 7.00 – 8.30 p.m.</p> <p>Trestle Arts Theatre, St Albans 12 noon – 4.00 p.m.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Stakeholder Panels and Partnerships</b></li> </ul> <p>Strategic Management Partnership</p>	<p>10<sup>th</sup> Sept 03</p>	<p>County Hall 4.30 – 6.30 p.m.</p>
<p>Achievement Panel (Area 1)</p> <p>Children and Families Panel</p> <p>Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership</p> <p>Scrutiny Committee</p>	<p>25<sup>th</sup> Sept 03</p> <p>25<sup>th</sup> Sept 03</p> <p>6<sup>th</sup> Oct 03</p> <p>15<sup>th</sup> Oct 03</p>	<p>Wheathampstead Development Centre, 10.00 – 12.30 p.m.</p> <p>County Hall 2.00 – 4.30 p.m.</p> <p>County Hall 5.00 – 7.00 p.m.</p> <p>County Hall</p>

<u>Process</u>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>
Special Needs Panel (Area 4)	16 <sup>th</sup> Oct 03	10.30 a.m. County Hall 2.00 – 4.30 p.m.
Corporate Parenting Panel (Area 5)	24 <sup>th</sup> Oct 03	County Hall 10.00 – 12.30 p.m.
School Resources Panel (Area 8)	19 <sup>th</sup> Nov 03	County Hall 10.00 – 12.30 p.m.
Scrutiny Committee	21 <sup>st</sup> Jan 04	County Hall 10.30 a.m.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Approval processes</b></li> </ul>	Dec-Feb	
Children and Families Panel	11 <sup>th</sup> Dec 03	County Hall 2.00 – 4.30 p.m.
Cabinet	9 <sup>th</sup> Feb 04	County Hall 2.00 p.m.
County Council	10 <sup>th</sup> Feb 04	County Hall 10.30 a.m.