

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & LEARNING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

POLICY REVIEW UPDATE

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

12 JANUARY 2012

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The report provides Members of the Committee with an update on the progress in relation to the policy review, and related working groups, being undertaken by the Children, Young People and Learning Scrutiny Committee around Early Intervention, Teenage Pregnancy and the Corporate Parent.

2. Background

- 2.1 Initial scoping documents were presented to the Committee on 21st July 2011 which set out proposed terms of reference for the review. At its meeting on 8th September 2011, the Committee considered a scene setting report for the review.
- 2.2 The Committee also established two working groups around teenage pregnancy and the Corporate Parent respectively. While these are separate pieces of work, it is acknowledged that there are strands to this research which will feed into the main policy review and provide some useful evidence.

3. As Soon As Possible: Early Intervention and Locality Services in Sunderland – Policy Review Update

- 3.1 Members of the Children, Young People and Learning Scrutiny Committee held its expert jury day to support the policy review into early intervention on Wednesday 14th December 2012. Some of the key points arising from the jury day were as follows:
- The multi-agency approach reduces the repetition for families and once initiated moves very quickly in response;
 - The approach brings together practitioners with a multitude of knowledge and skills to produce better outcome for families;
 - Problems do not exist in isolation and tackling a range of issues at the same time creates huge benefits;

- Families have a general sense of fear of engagement arising from the apprehension that their children will be taken away from them;
- The location of services and transport is also an issue and can create a barrier to accessing services and support for those most disadvantaged;
- There remains lots of work to be done with families, as some are more able to cope with the situation than others. It is worth remembering that parents have a different viewpoint on their own child than others. Some parents are still grieving for the child they do not have as against the child they have;
- Barriers exist around the motivation of young people and their parents; there are often inter-generational issues that create barriers to intervention. As well as the often chaotic circumstances that young people and families live in, and;
- There were issues surrounding the capacity of the council and partners to sustain the current CAF process and system.

3.2 A full detailed note of the meeting is attached at **appendix 1** of this report.

3.3 The committee also met with a representative of the Department for Education on 21st December 2011, to ascertain the central government position and direction of travel in relation to early intervention. A full account of this session is attached at **appendix 2** of this report.

4. Next Steps

4.1 Further evidence gathering activities will be developed around looking at holding a focus group with a number of agencies involved in the early intervention agenda, visiting the XL youth village project and looking at a best practice visit. **Appendix 2** shows the timetable for the policy review.

5. Recommendations

5.1 That the Committee notes the progress made in relation to the policy review into early intervention.

5.2 That the Committee notes the future evidence gathering activities as part of the review process.

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