

For General Release

REPORT TO:	CABINET 16 March 2015
AGENDA ITEM:	13
SUBJECT:	Children and Families' Plan 2015-16
LEAD OFFICER:	Paul Greenhalgh, Executive Director - People
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Alisa Flemming, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Learning
WARDS:	All
<p>CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT: Ambitious for Croydon JOBS & THE ECONOMY: To enable more local people to access a wider range of jobs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The % of young people who are not in education, employment or training • The % of people aged 18-24 who are claiming Job Seeker's Allowance <p>EDUCATION & LEARNING: To enable people of all ages to reach their potential through access to quality schools and learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The % children achieving good outcomes at the early years foundation stage • The % of state-funded schools judged good or outstanding by Ofsted • The % parents offered one of top 3 school choices for their children • Reducing the gap in attainment at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 between the highest and lowest performing wards. • Educational attainment by age 19 <p>EARLY INTERVENTION: To help families be healthy and resilient and able to maximise their life chances and independence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The % of "troubled families" turned around (as measured by achievement of outcome payment criteria) • The % of eligible two, three and four year olds accessing funded early Education <p>HEALTH: To help people from all communities live longer, healthier lives through positive lifestyle choices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of children aged 10-11 classified as overweight or obese. <p>SAFEGUARDING: To protect children and vulnerable adults from harm and exploitation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The % of audits of children's social care case files where the case is rated good or better* • The no. of children looked after and child protection cases per 10,000 children within the borough • % of single assessments (children's) carried out within 45 days • The average time between a child entering care and adoption • The number of children being adopted 	

TACKLING THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS: To help families and individuals be more financially resilient and live affordable lives

- The proportion of children living in poverty (as defined by DWP)

AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON & WHY ARE WE DOING THIS:

The Children and Families Plan is the key way to ensure that all agencies are jointly focused on achieving our high aspirations for the children and young people of Croydon; tackling challenging issues and reducing inequalities.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no revenue or capital consequences resulting from accepting the recommendations of this report.

KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.: This is not an executive key decision – this is reserved to the full Council for decision as part of the policy framework.

The Leader of the Council has delegated to the Cabinet the power to make the decisions set out in the recommendations below:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is asked to recommend that the Council that having considered the Equalities Impact Assessment at Appendix 2 and the Council's public sector equality duty in relation to the issues detailed in the report agrees:-

- 1.1 The refreshed Croydon Children and Families Plan for 2015-16 at Appendix 1;
- 1.2 The actions identified at para.8.2 to ensure the Council meets its public sector equality duty .

2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 The Children and Families' Plan is the umbrella document for the work of partner agencies to improve the outcomes of children, young people and families in Croydon over the next year. Whilst the plan is no longer a statutory requirement, Croydon Children and Families Partnership has chosen to continue to hold and develop a Children and Families Plan (previously known as the Children and Young People Plan), as a key way to ensure that all agencies are jointly focused on achieving our high aspirations for the children and young people of Croydon.

2.2 The Children and Families Partnership offers a structure to enable best practice partnership working across Croydon. As well as introducing the refresh of the Children and Families Plan 2015-16, this report reflects some of the key successes achieved across the partnership during the course of 2014-15 and which continue to be built upon.

2.3 The needs and assets analyses supporting the plan and resulting, selected key areas for action contribute to the Council meeting its statutory equality responsibilities in relation to children and families. This refreshed plan is a

draft, subject to agreement by the Children and Families Partnership Board on 16 February 2015.

3 DETAIL

3.1 The refreshed 2015-16 plan was developed by the Croydon Children and Families Partnership. Members of the Partnership include Croydon Council, Health agencies, the Police, the Voluntary Sector, the Fire Service, Croydon early years settings, schools and colleges and the Croydon Youth Council.

3.2 Review of the Children and Families Plan 2014-15

The starting point for the development of the plan was a review of progress against the 2014-15 priorities delivered by the partnership's sub-groups. This has been built upon by drawing on the full dedicated needs analysis completed for the Partnership in 2013-14, and supplementing this with a range of the very latest needs analyses, completed in 14-15 or currently still in process, for specific areas of need including on children with SEN, children's emotional health and wellbeing, looked after children and safeguarding, child poverty, homelessness; domestic violence; alcohol; and obesity. These will be published on Croydon Observatory at: http://www.croydonobservatory.org/needs_assessment/.

3.3 Partnership successes over the last year

The Council works with multiple agencies in order to improve services to children, young people and their families. These include:

- **Working with schools, health services and other partners, the local authority implemented the requirements of the Children and Families Act for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.** This included publishing a Local Offer to improve the understanding families and practitioners have of what services are available in Croydon. Good progress has also been achieved from partnership working with schools to transition the first phase of children with statements to education, health and care plans. This is a requirement of the act, which places a greater emphasis on improving children's outcomes in partnership.
- **New Early Help Guidance was developed by all partners and endorsed by the Children and Families Partnership and the Croydon Safeguarding Children Board.** The Guidance was launched in June and the Locality Early Help team is providing support, training and advice on its implementation to all those working with children and families. The embedding of the guidance and application of the thresholds is the responsibility of individual agencies and an Early Help Dashboard has been developed to track improvements in the quantity and quality of Early Help Assessments (CAF).
- **The Troubled Families programme was successful in meeting its target of turning around the lives of 285 families.** The local programme, which is delivered by the Family Resilience Service together with local partners, has been confirmed as an early adopter of phase II of the programme. Phase II offers a more flexible approach than previously – this will enable the council and partners to develop new

ways of working according to a think family approach.

- **1360 new mainstream school places and an additional 72 Special Educational Needs places were provided in the borough during 2014.** Every child in Croydon had the offer of a school place with 92% of those applying to secondary school receiving an offer from one of their top three schools. (Partnership with Schools)
- **A fully integrated Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) was established, with representation from all key agencies.** The MASH has been the subject of an independent audit undertaken by Croydon's Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB). The outcome of the audit was generally positive and was considered in full by the LSCB
- **Croydon Clinical Commissioning group has funded the appointment of two specialist asthma nurses to join Croydon Health Services' Children's Hospital at Home team.** Following a period of induction, the nurses will work across the partnership: their role will include training GPs and practice nurses, working with pharmacists, school nurses and schools with the objective of reducing avoidable Accident and Emergency attendance as a result of asthma attacks.
- **The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) awarded Croydon £1.48m to support transformation across the Best Start partnership.** The Cabinet was supportive of the development of this programme, bringing together services for the 0-5 age group into a single seamless and integrated service from September 2015.
- **The Crossfire project educated over 20,000 children and young people, as well as working with families and older people.** Crossfire is a Fire Service project, working across all ages in Croydon. It includes community engagement, training and education leading to a reduction in arson and anti-social behaviour. Crossfire is unique to Croydon. The programme is tailored to the age group and setting. Ranging from 'safe/unsafe' games in pre-school, through developing home fire escape plans to the impact of arson and hoax calling. In secondary schools the fire service coordinates involvement of other agencies according to what the school requests including Ambulance, Battersea dogs home, Trident, Police, Voyage (stop & search) Sexual Health.
- **Twelve young people were trained to be young inspectors.** The young inspectors identified services they wished to inspect; their first was the Drop In Zone run by CAYSH in the Turnaround Centre. For the inspection the young people carried out two mystery shops, one known observation, staff interviews and a young people questionnaire. They collated the results and produced a report with recommendations to CAYSH. A follow up inspection was carried out a few months later at which nine of their thirteen recommendations had been implemented.

- **The Care Leaver NEET and Housing Strategic Partnership worked to improve educational, employment and housing opportunities for young people aged 18-20 known to the Leaving Care service.** The Partnership meets once a month bringing together representatives from different parts of the Council as well as external agencies, such as Bluetouch Consultancy, Catch-22 and BELS. The ongoing contact between these agencies ensures all parties involved can address issues pertinent to the lives of those for whom Croydon provides a service in a consistent and unified manner.
- **In partnership with a local children’s centre, Croydon Adult Learning and Training have begun to pilot a new pathways to employment course specifically tailored to the needs of lone parents.** If it is successful, the programme will be rolled out to other locations in the borough.
- **The cabinet unanimously approved the new Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (DASV) strategy with increased funding from 2016 to support the development of new and innovative services.** The Family Justice Centre continues to work with partners to support victims and to drive forward a partnership approach to tackling DASV in Croydon.
- **An Information Sharing leaflet was developed by the Children and Families Partnership to help promote a culture of sharing information across agencies.** It was subsequently endorsed by the Croydon Safeguarding Children’s Board, Croydon Adult’s Safeguarding Board, Health and Wellbeing Board and Croydon Youth Council as local guidance and an enabler of good practice. The leaflet signposts to additional guidance and to training. It is one of the ways in which the Children and Families Partnership supports a committed and open approach to multi-agency working in Croydon.
- **Children, young people and parents have been successfully involved in policy development, service review and staff recruitment across a number of service areas throughout the year.** For example, young parents and their babies were involved in the annual review and recruitment of two new family nurses in the family nurse partnership. Elsewhere, young people were consulted about the review of school nursing and therapies to inform their future commissioning strategy.

3.4 Proposed Children and Families Plan priorities 2015-16

For 2015-16, the Partnership has chosen to continue its focus in on a reduced, core number of priority areas for action. These priorities have been identified based on the needs analyses considered for the plan, the review of progress achieved in 2014-15 and engagement of young people throughout the year. The priorities have also been selected on the basis that they can only be delivered in true, strategic partnership across agencies as they relate to challenging, “wicked” issues which require the input of many partners.

3.5 The proposed priorities are listed below:

- Improve the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people
- Increase the impact of early intervention
- Improve pathway planning for children and young people with learning difficulties/disabilities
- Improve the health and education/training outcomes for Looked After Children
- Increase participation in education, employment and training and improve outcomes at age 19
- Reduce childhood obesity
- Reduce child poverty and mitigate the impact of poverty
- Encourage partners to strengthen the consistency of engagement with children, young people and families

3.6 Key areas for action relating to each priority are included in the Plan in section 5, which will be used by priority leads and Partnership sub groups to develop detailed action plans.

3.7 In line with the way the priorities are phrased, the focus is very much on delivering against outcomes, and partnership working that will make a difference to the lives of children and young people and their families.

3.8 Progress against action plans are reported to the Partnership Executive at its bimonthly meetings. The Executive reports on progress from the sub groups to the Board by exception.

3.9 Agreement of the Children and Families Plan

The refreshed Croydon Children and Families' Plan for 2015-16 is appended and should be considered as draft, subject to agreement by the Children and Families Partnership Board when it meets on 16 February 2015.

3.10 Other agencies that make up the Children and Families Partnership have been asked to take the plan through the governance arrangements for their agency, to ensure that all agencies have adopted and demonstrated commitment to the plan.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 Multi-agency sub groups and the Executive of the Children and Families Partnership have been consulted and involved in the development of this plan. The Croydon Youth Council were consulted on the priorities for 2014-15 and their views have informed the final set. Section 4 of the plan shows the summary of priorities for 2015-16, which have been developed taking account of the Youth Council priorities.

5 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 There are no direct revenue or capital consequences resulting from accepting

the recommendations of this report.

Approved by: Lisa Taylor – Head of Finance and Deputy S151 Officer

6. COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SOLICITOR AND MONITORING OFFICER

- 6.1 The Solicitor to the Council comments that there are no additional legal issues arising from this report.

Approved by J Harris Baker, head of social care and education law on behalf of the director of democratic and legal services.

7. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 7.1 There are no direct human resources implications arising from this report.

Approved by Deborah Calliste, HR business partner, on behalf of the Director of Human Resources.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.1 An equality impact assessment for the development and oversight of the plan has been appended to this report. The needs and assets analyses supporting the plan and key areas for action contribute to the Council meeting its statutory equality responsibilities in relation to children and families.

- 8.2 As a result of the equalities impact assessment the following actions have been identified:

- In further development of Partnership performance management and reporting, make sure there is a focus on equality impact.
- Continue to make sure Partnership forward agendas address equality issues and differential outcomes whenever these arise.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 9.1 This plan has no direct impact on the environment.

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

- 10.1 This plan has no direct impact on crime and disorder reduction.

11. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

- 11.1 The plan is no longer a statutory requirement. Croydon Children and Families Partnership has chosen to continue to have a Children and Families Plan (previously known as the Children and Young People Plan) as a way of ensuring that all agencies are jointly focused on achieving our high aspirations for the children and young people of Croydon.

12. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

12.1 Not applicable

CONTACT OFFICER: Sam Taylor, Joint Head of Partnerships and Children's Integrated Commissioning

Appendix 1: Children and Families' Plan – 2015-16 refresh

Appendix 2: Equality Impact Assessment

BACKGROUND PAPERS - LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Previous Children and Families Plan 2014-15 – published on the Council's website.