



**Children and Young People  
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**  
12 February 2013

**Report from the Director of Children  
and Families Department**

For Information

Wards Affected:  
ALL

**Update on progressing recommendations of Youth  
Offending Task Group/Early Years Intervention Task Group**

**1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 A report was produced by the above Task Groups which was considered by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee in September 2011. This included a set of recommendations which were commented on at the time by officers and actions were proposed. This report updates this Committee on the follow-up work from that report.

**2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the committee notes and comments upon the information provided in the attached report.

**3.0 Draft**

- 3.1 The recommendations from the report on prevention and early intervention are attached as Appendix A to this report. At the time that the report was produced, September 2011, a detailed commentary was produced on each recommendation by officers in Children and Families and other council departments. Rather than reproduce that lengthy document with a further commentary, a more succinct summary is set out of the work that has followed on from and been informed by the scrutiny reviews.
- 3.2 It is important to recognise that prevention is now centre stage in the working of the Children and Families Department and in the Plan for Children and Young People in Brent which was adopted at the end of 2012. It will also feature in the refresh of the Borough Plan which is currently being undertaken by the Chief Executive.
- 3.3 Most significant in the development of a more coherent approach to prevention is the Working with Families Programme, on which the Assistant Director, Early Help and Education presented to the CYP Scrutiny Committee in December. There is a series of detailed project plans for that Programme, including timelines and performance indicators. This effectively constitutes the comprehensive preventative strategy which the scrutiny reviews sought. While there are resource constraints in the

current financial climate and organisational and technical barriers to be overcome, the Working with Families Strategy incorporates the following:

- The development of a financial model which shows the savings and cost-avoidance from a preventative approach
- The development of a 'team around the family' approach through the use of Family Support Workers and others playing a co-ordinating role
- Improved data sharing through the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and a better common understanding of risk factors
- Greater commonality of thresholds and arrangements for stepping up and stepping down from social care and other interventions, again supported by the MASH
- Co-location of teams at the new Civic Centre and in Children's Centres and Social Care Locality Offices
- Involving the schools in identifying and referring families as well as better aligning the support they provide to council services
- Realigning provision for young people to ensure that those at risk of becoming involved in crime are better targeted and those lower risk cases held by the Youth Offending Service are prevented from escalating

#### **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 The financial implications of the Working with Families Programme have been dealt with within that programme

#### **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications from this report

#### **6.0 Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 The Working with Families Programme is subject to a predictive EIA.

#### **7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)**

- 7.1 None directly. This report refers to co-location of teams at the new Civic Centre and other existing council locations.

#### **Contact Officers**

Sara Williams  
Assistant Director, Early Help and Education, Children and Families Department  
Sara.williams@brent.gov.uk

Krutika Pau  
Director of Children & Families Department  
Krutika.pau@brent.gov.uk

**Appendix A**

**Recommendations of the Scrutiny Review on Prevention – August 2011**

| Recommendation  |
|---|
| <p>1. Brent should develop a comprehensive Prevention Strategy, joining up and coordinating the prevention of all negative outcomes for children and young people including poor educational achievement, poor mental, emotional and physical health, teenage pregnancy, drug and alcohol misuse and offending and antisocial behaviour. The Strategy should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) include an explicit commitment to prevention as a cost-effective long term approach to managing demand on services, which is embedded in practice amongst the council and its partners;</li> <li>b) set out the joint commitment of all partners to working together at all levels to prevent and intervene early against poor outcomes, based on “Think Family”;</li> <li>c) revise the existing data-sharing protocol to address issues preventing the quick and convenient sharing of secure data electronically by the NHS with relevant teams in the council;</li> <li>d) explore options for embedded working across disciplines, such as virtual teams or co-location;</li> <li>e) feature supporting parenting as a major component, including any unmet objectives from the Parenting Strategy 2010-11; and</li> <li>f) be implemented with specific, measurable, time limited actions; individual accountability; and regular and rigorous monitoring by the Children’s Partnership Board’s Executive.</li> </ul> |
| <p>2. Early Years settings, primary and secondary schools, and other relevant institutions should cooperate to enable early intervention in relation to needs arising from transitions.</p>   |
| <p>3. Universal Early Years practitioners, such as health visitors, child minders, and nursery nurses, should be equipped to identify additional needs early and encouraged to provide support to children and families where possible, to reduce demand for Tier 2 services. This should focus in particular on social and emotional development and parenting support, and should include appropriate professional supervision.</p>   |
| <p>4. The Task and Finish Group on Complex Families should consider opportunities for pooling resources to enhance the effectiveness of early intervention, for the purposes of realising longer-term savings for all public service providers.</p>   |
| <p>5. Preventative work by the Council and its partners should address each of the eight categories set out by the Independent Commission; and any new programmes funded in future should be selected from those approved by the Graham Allen review.</p>   |
| <p>6. A regularly-updated needs assessment should be undertaken to inform the Prevention Strategy, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) a profile of relevant risk factors, protective factors and outcomes for children;</li> <li>b) an audit of existing services and programmes for their effectiveness and supporting evidence;</li> </ul>  |

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| <p>c) the findings of the final report on the Parenting Strategy 2010-11; and</p> <p>d) in-depth research and analysis regarding families' experiences of preventative and early intervention services.</p>  |
| <p>7. The tools used to assess risks in young people include all risk factors identified by the Independent Commission.</p>  |
| <p>8. Future Child Poverty Needs Assessments and Strategies take into account the findings of this report.</p>   |
| <p>9. The needs assessment and Prevention Strategy are overseen by the Children's Partnership Board.</p>   |
| <p>10. The Strategic Implementation Group acts to address weaknesses and inconsistencies in Team Around the Child meetings, including non-attendance by professionals, unwillingness to take on the Lead Professional role, and perceptions of meetings' ineffectiveness amongst participants.</p> |
| <p>11. Work is undertaken to benchmark reintegration rates of excluded pupils in Brent against peer authorities. This should take into account reintegrated pupils who are subsequently permanently excluded again.</p>  |
| <p>12. The School Improvement Service prioritises and advocates programmes on the Allen list intended for educational settings, and focuses on increased support for Early Years providers.</p>  |
| <p>13. The availability of opportunities for young people in Brent to engage in alternative and vocational forms of learning is expanded where possible; and takeup is encouraged where appropriate to pupils' aptitudes and abilities.</p>  |
| <p>14. Croydon's Peer2Peer Support measures are examined and evaluated, and effective elements replicated in Brent to support networks for vulnerable and isolated parents.</p>  |
| <p>15. Options are examined for the views of parents to be represented on an ongoing basis, such as via a Parents' Council.</p>  |
| <p>16. With the support of the Corporate Policy Team, Mosaic Public Sector is used to analyse and determine the most effective methods of promoting parenting support, and determining the best access channels for different groups of parents.</p>   |
| <p>17. Strategic objectives and measures of success for preventative services should focus on achievement of sustained outcomes beyond the lifetime of specific interventions.</p>   |
| <p>18. Professionals from the relevant teams and agencies are trained jointly, to ensure consistent understanding of obligations, and to build relationships. The benefits of working together and complementing each others' services should be a core learning point.</p>                        |
| <p>19. Learning and development for all professionals incorporates opportunities to reflect and learn about emerging practice, and fosters innovation, eg time away from the day-to-day working environment and learning from peers.</p>   |