



Executive
19 September 2012

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

Wards Affected:
ALL

A Plan for Children and Families in Brent (2012-2015)

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to set out a three year partnership Plan for Children and Families in Brent (PCFB) for the attention of Executive attached as Appendix 1 to this report. The Plan builds on the achievements of the previous Children and Young People's Plan (2010-12) and brings together in a single document our vision and key priorities for improving outcomes for children and families in Brent. The PCFB strengthens the coordination and integration of a range of strategic plans (set out in Appendix C of the Plan) and is underpinned by robust performance management arrangements, which will help to monitor and drive forward improvements. The development of this plan fulfils a key recommendation from the Safeguarding and Looked After Children's Inspection Action Plan.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Executive agree the content of the PCFB and note that the priorities and outcomes will be fully integrated in service area plans and priorities.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The Children Act 2004 required each Local Authority in England and Wales to publish a Children & Young People's Plan (CYPP) which set out its strategy for discharging its functions in relation to all children and young people in the area. This was enshrined further in law with The Children's Trust Board (Children and Young People's Plan) (England) Regulations 2010 which passed the responsibility for preparing and publishing the CYPP to the Local Authority Children's Trust Board. The legislation stated that the CYPP had to set out the agreed joint strategy of the Board partners for co-operating with each other with a view to improving children and young people's well-being in the local area.

- 3.2 The Coalition Government revoked these regulations and removed the requirement for the publication for a CYPP, however, they stated that a Plan could still be produced where “it made sense locally”. Most local authorities continue to have a single plan for children and young people which demonstrates a formal commitment from partners to improve outcomes for local children. Regardless of any legislative changes, during an inspection process, Ofsted are likely to take a dim view of an authority that did not have a plan setting out its ambition and vision for children and young people in the area.
- 3.3 In January 2012 Brent Children’s Partnership (BCP), formerly our Children’s Trust, made a decision to continue to have a strategic plan evidencing their commitment and drive to improve the lives of children and families in Brent. This has resulted in the Plan for Children and Families in Brent 2012 – 15.
- 3.4 BCP is committed to continue to improve services and support to children, young people and their families and to do so by focusing on the areas where partners can work together to make the most difference. We have therefore identified the following three strategic priorities:-

Priority 1: Ensure that children and young people in our borough are healthy and safe

Safeguarding is a top priority if we are to ensure our children and young people are healthy, safe and protected from harm, abuse and neglect. Through early intervention, making a healthy start and by providing effective support for children and families, we will reduce the number of children coming into care or becoming subject of child protection plans and improve outcomes for children with disabilities.

Priority 2: Narrow the gap between those children who do well and those who need extra support to thrive, so the aspirations of every Brent child are realised. Also to ensure that there are sufficient school places to meet the continuing increase in demand

We will consider all possible strategies and initiatives to increase the supply of school places. We will improve the educational attainment of all children and young people, including looked after children, children with special educational needs and /or disabilities and children from black and ethnic minorities. We will focus on closing the gap between those who do well and those who may need extra support to thrive, to enable successful progression into adult life and employability.

Priority 3: to fully integrate services to develop resilient families

We are committed to delivering integrated services that focus on families and are designed to identify need early and provide targeted support and protection. We shall also continue to ensure that universal services are in place for all children, young people and families. We will help children get a healthy start in life and improve emotional health and well being, tackle child poverty and support children and young people to take part in positive activities as well as giving parents the skills to get back to work.

- 3.5 These emerged through a process of reviewing priorities from the previous two Children & Young People’s Plans and identifying areas which continue to require improvement, from looking at the profile of children and young people in

Brent in conjunction with the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis and the Child Poverty Needs Assessment, and by examining emerging issues.

3.6 The PCFB has a robust action plan which provides the framework for ensuring that progress is made. The actions relate to a performance management framework which is based on a number of national performance indicators, together with locally developed indicators and key milestones for completion of actions. This includes the measures relating to children's services that are included in the Children & Families Performance Improvement Plan and in agreement with NHS Brent. Over the next three years, this will be used to Support delivery of the outcomes and actions identified in this plan and will be reviewed at Brent Children's Partnership meetings.

3.7 The PCFB has been developed through consultation with service areas in the Council and our partners, with children and young people and with parents and carers. Improving the lives of children and young people in Brent is everybody's business and everyone across the Council has a role to play in making this happen.

4.0 Financial Implications

Any costs arising out of this report will be met from within existing Children and Families budgets.

5.0 Legal Implications

None

6.0 Diversity Implications

6.1 There are no diversity implications contained within this report.

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

There are no accommodation issues contained within this report.

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