

# **Cabinet**

## **6 October 2020**

### **Children and Young People and Families’ Plan 2020-2023**

#### **For Recommendation to Council**

**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr P Wharf, Corporate Development and Change

**Local Councillor(s):** **All Councillors**

**Executive Director:** Theresa Leavy, Interim Lead for Children's Services

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**Report Status:** Public

**Recommendation:** Cabinet are asked:

1. To recommend the Children, Young People and Families Plan 2020-23 for endorsement and adoption by Full Council.
2. To agree to receive an Annual Report of the Children, Young People and Families’ Plan 2020-23.

**Reason for Recommendation:** The Full Council is required to adopt a Children and Young People’s Plan as part of the Council’s policy framework by 31 March 2021.

#### **1. Executive Summary**

Dorset Council, working with its partners - the Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People, has developed a new 3-year strategic plan to improve long term outcomes for children and young people.

The Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People is a multi-agency partnership which includes partners from police, health, schools and early years settings, voluntary and community sector.

The vision for the partnership is:

*“for Dorset to be the best place to be a child, where communities thrive and families are supported to be the best they can be.”*

The partnership has agreed six priorities to deliver that vision, focusing on improving outcomes for all children and young people:

- **Best start in life:** focused on: re-imagining how services are delivered to families who are expecting and have pre-school children; ensuring the best possible start in life; and improving school readiness.
- **Young and thriving:** focused on: setting up our young people for success in adulthood; ensuring young people have a strong voice; good emotional wellbeing and mental health; preparation for adulthood; and preventing family breakdown.
- **Good care provision:** focused: on keeping our children close to home; ensuring partners are the best corporate parents; making sure there is sufficient care provision locally (foster care, residential and short breaks); supporting young people at risk of homelessness; and suitable and safe housing for care leavers.
- **Best education for all:** focused on: supporting schools and educational settings to deliver the best education possible; ensuring all children and young people can achieve their full potential; meeting the needs of children with SEND and building inclusive school cultures.
- **Best place to live:** focused on: ensuring our children and young people have accessible things to do and places to go; can get involved and influence decision making; that they experience safe, welcoming and inclusive places; contextual safeguarding; and that we work as a partnership to provide a cleaner, greener environment for our children and young people to grow up in.
- **Delivering locally:** focused on: joining up services in Dorset to become a whole system that strengthens the ability of families to care and sustain their children; embedding the new model of children’s services; identifying opportunities for service integration; and building on community assets.

The priorities in the plan have been identified through needs analysis, an initial workshop with members of the Strategic Alliance and a series of think tanks (attended by over 100 professionals from the partnership).

In July 2020 the Council undertook the ‘I Live in Dorset’ campaign encouraging children and young people from Dorset to tell us about what would make Dorset the best place to grow up. The feedback from children and young people has

influenced the development of this plan and resulted in an additional priority, Best Place to Live.

## **2. Financial Implications**

None identified. The transformation priorities within this plan relating to services provided or commissioned by the Council are aligned to Council plans. The partnership has adopted 'Delivering best value for money - spending the Dorset £ in Dorset on the things that get the best outcomes for children and families' as one of its shared values and principles.

## **3. Climate implications**

None identified. The Best Place to Live priority includes work to influence increased cycle lanes and improved public transport and to champion the use of green energy, reduction in waste, recycling and reduction in the use of plastic and work to reduce carbon emissions.

## **4. Other Implications**

This plan will seek to ensure the involvement of voluntary and community organisations in the delivery of a plan to support the wellbeing of children and young people, including meeting our responsibilities as corporate parents.

## **5. Risk Assessment**

Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: LOW

Residual Risk: LOW

## **6. Equalities Impact Assessment**

A draft Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed and will be finalised in readiness for Full Council.

## **7. Appendices**

Appendix 1: Children, Young People and Families Plan 2020-23.

## **8. Background Papers**

## **9. Introduction & Background**

- 9.1 Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 sets out the requirement for the local authority to promote that partners co-operate to improve wellbeing of children and young people. Best practice is for Local Authorities and their partners to produce and deliver a Children and Young People's Plan bringing together in one strategic overarching plan the partnership's shared commitment to work together to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- 9.2 In Dorset the Council has maintained its commitment to improve outcomes for children and young people in producing and publishing a Children and Young People's Plan as part of its constitution and formal Policy Framework.
- 9.3 The current partnership Strategy for Children and Young People in Dorset comes to an end in 2020. During 2019 Dorset Council, with partners of the multi-agency Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People, agreed to undertake the work to develop a new 3-year Children, Young People and Families Plan.
- 9.4 This work commenced in March 2020, following an analysis of data and a partnership workshop, a set of initial priorities were identified. These priorities were then further developed through a series of 'think tanks' attended by over 100 professionals from across the partnership, and representative parents/carers, children and young people. Employee engagement with children's services staff has also been undertaken.
- 9.5 Engagement with children and young people has taken place through a creative challenge to support the development of the plan. The 'I Live in Dorset' campaign was shared through social media channels and through schools and colleges throughout July 2020.
- 9.6 An initial report outlining emerging priorities for the Children, Young People and Families Plan was presented to People Scrutiny Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2020. The Committee noted their support of the development of the new Children, Young People and Families Plan.
- 9.7 At its meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> September 2020 the Strategic Alliance Board unanimously agreed to approve the plan, which sees the partnership adopt shared values, principles and priorities for children, young people and families in Dorset, a significant milestone for the partnership.

## **10. Development of the plan**

- 10.1 The vision for Dorset Children and Young People agreed by the partnership is:

*“for Dorset to be the best place to be a child, where communities thrive, and families are supported to be the best that they can be”*

- 10.2 A set of principles, agreed by the partnership, guided the development of the plan these included: optimise the partnership dividend by focusing on the things we can make a real difference to by working together; work on the longer term vision, focusing on the big picture; think the unthinkable; innovate and try new things; be brave; be one system that works to achieve the very best outcomes possible for children; deliver value for money; and wherever possible spend the Dorset pound in Dorset.
- 10.3 Using analysis of data and information already known to the partnership about outcomes and performance gaps, and feedback from consultation, a set of priority areas have been identified:
- (a) **Best start in life:** aims to reimagine how services are delivered to families who are expecting and have pre-school children. This seeks to address low social mobility and improve school readiness; improve outcomes for our youngest children. Priorities in this theme include improving sharing of information and data, better identification of those that might need help early, improved pathways between maternity, health visiting and local authority services and the development of intergenerational Family Hubs.
  - (b) **Young and thriving:** aims to set up our young people for success in adulthood. This seeks to address the issue of poorer outcomes for children who enter care later in their childhood and ensure all young people are prepared for adulthood. Priorities in this theme include ensuring young people have a strong voice; good emotional wellbeing and mental health; preparation for adulthood; and preventing family breakdown through edge of care services and support.
  - (c) **Good care provision:** aims to keep our children close to home and to ensure that partners are the best corporate parents. This seeks to increase the number of children in family based care that are able to be cared for in Dorset and closer to their friends, family and schools; improve the educational and housing outcomes for our children in care and care leavers and improve their health and wellbeing. Priorities in this theme will focus on improving the availability of short breaks; increasing and improving support and accommodation for vulnerable young people at risk of homelessness and care leavers; increase the availability of local residential provision; increase the number of foster carers and work in partnership to improve our offer for children in care and care leavers, including health and wellbeing and education and employment opportunities.

(d) **Best education for all:** aims to ensure that our schools and educational settings are supported to deliver the best education possible and that our children achieve their full potential. This seeks to improve the proportion of schools that are good or outstanding across the county; improve educational progress of children; reduce the number of exclusions from school, improve school attendance and support children that are educated at home. Priorities in this theme will include building the partnership with schools and academies to develop and implement an Education and Inclusion Strategy; improve educational outcomes for more vulnerable children; and further improve our offer to children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

(e) **Best place to live:** aims to make Dorset the best place to live and grow up and for children and young people to live in thriving communities, where they can safely live, learn, and play and where all voices are valued and respected. Priorities in this theme include focusing on ensuring our children and young people: have accessible things to do and places to go; can get involved and influence decision making; experience safe, welcoming and inclusive places. We will develop our approach to contextual safeguarding including embedding work on improving our approach to child exploitation and county lines; and ensure that we work as a partnership to provide a cleaner, greener environment for our children and young people to grow up in.

(f) **Delivering locally:** aims to create a whole system that strengthens families' ability to care and sustain. This seeks to address the high proportion of children in care in Dorset, improve the range of early help on offer and address parental issues such as domestic abuse, mental ill health and substance misuse. Priorities in this theme include embedding the new model for children's services; community engagement and asset building; and opportunities for partnership service integration.

10.4 Alongside these Priority areas the partnership has committed to developing a shared culture and approach to working in partnership further through: developing a Joint Commissioning Strategy for children and young people, aligning partnership workforce development, working together and with children and families to co-produce services and making the best use of our collective resources in times of increased demand and a challenging financial situation for all partners.

10.5 Progress against the plan will be monitored by the Strategic Alliance Board at quarterly meetings. An Annual Report will be prepared and

published to report on progress made every year throughout the duration of the plan.

10.6 Progress will also be monitored through People and Health Scrutiny Committee.

## 11. **Recommendation**

11.1 Cabinet Members are asked:

1. To recommend the Children, Young People and Families Plan 2020-23 for endorsement and adoption by the Full Council.

### **Footnote:**

Issues relating to financial, legal, environmental, economic and equalities implications have been considered and any information relevant to the decision is included within the report.