

Transforming service delivery for children and young people

A multi-agency strategy for action

March 2011



Introduction

We are in a period of very significant change in the economic and political environment of the country and the implications for public services are clear. There will be far less money for all agencies in the public sector and we must make very significant savings, drive out inefficiencies and review the shape and nature of all that we deliver to support communities and the individuals within them.

Nationally, the government is creating a different expectation of public services – enablement and resilience not dependency, local not central decision making, involvement and ownership by communities of their issues, needs and solutions, and an efficient lean and much less costly public sector.

For the public sector agencies in Lancashire this means that we must examine together all that we do, particularly our support for those who are the most vulnerable. We all need to reduce our costs, maximise the availability and utilisation of frontline staff, and change the culture of our support from creating dependency to enabling resilience and coping. This may mean that we will stop delivering and commissioning some services and as partners we will need to support each other in this. We need to ensure that our money and services are spent on those who need it most either for early intervention to prevent an escalation of need, or to manage complex and severe needs. In all cases we must be focused on achieving better outcomes and delivering more together as we cannot afford not to.

Context

With this in mind, a Children's Trust strategic summit was held on 5th October 2010 and a Children's Trust Strategic Partnership away day on 22nd October 2010. The purpose of both of these meetings was to develop and agree a commitment to a different approach to service delivery for children and young people: one which is co-owned, co-delivered and co-located. The overall vision has now been agreed by the Children's Trust Board.

This service delivery vision is only one strand in the development of the new Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) 2011-2014. Other work that is currently underway includes:

- A comprehensive needs analysis of children and young people in Lancashire through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)
- Consultation on the priority outcomes for the new CYPP
- Engagement of children and young people in setting the priorities of the plan, so far well over 3000 children and young people have been involved
- A 'horizon scanning' exercise to analyse the impact of changes in Government policy.

It is very clear that in the current economic climate and with all partners facing significant financial challenges we cannot continue to deliver services for children and young people in the way we have always done. As a Children's Trust we need to work together better, smarter and more efficiently.

This report is a developing document, the final version of which will be the basis of the service delivery section of our new CYPP. We welcome your comments and views, but most

importantly we want you to use this document as a basis for transforming the way we deliver services for children, young people and their families.

What do we need to change?

Whilst there are many examples of good practice, the following key issues and challenges exist with current service delivery.

There is a need for stronger evidence as the basis for strategy and planning. There is sometimes a lack of clarity of 'what works' and a need to understand the precise needs and issues of groups within our communities.

There are perceptions of negative consequences of information sharing. There is a need for the endorsement of stronger protocols for information sharing. Officers have varying levels of understanding of legislation related to information sharing. In certain cases it is unclear that the 'client' in a situation is the child. This leads to confused responsibilities on data sharing. Staff need to know that the chief executives of their organisations have endorsed and will accept the consequences of giving staff permission to share information, as the consequences of **not** sharing are potentially far greater

Very few staff are aware of all of the services being delivered leading to confusion and duplication. This encourages people to wait until the situation becomes more acute and then to make formal referrals for services when there are actions that could have been taken much earlier. Partners expressed concern that they are not always aware of services that are currently available for children and young people both locally and across Lancashire. This results in difficulties in making effective referrals and in duplication of activity when working with families.

There is a sense of 'fragmentation' of current service delivery arrangements. There is a disconnection between existing services (e.g. teenage pregnancy and sexual health). Shifting commissioning arrangements and changing organisational structures are exaggerating the current fragmentation of service delivery.

The Children's Trust could strengthen its impact. It was suggested that partners should focus on more specific goals, outcomes and 'deliverables'. Current priorities are too broad and do not always result in clear commitment to action from partners. Partners need to become more effective at working with the 'third sector', commissioning different outcome focused services, involving parents, carers and young people, and in harnessing the resources of the wider community.

We cannot work with children and young people in isolation. There is a clear need to develop our understanding of the complex relationships that exist around individual children and young people. How these family and community links can, and do, support children and young people and how these can be strengthened.

Move from a deficit based model of delivery to one that is focussed on existing strengths. Supporting practitioners to build on the existing skills and experiences of families

and providing a framework that empowers and enables these families to move towards more positive outcomes.

Revisiting our continuum of need to identify and understand together the terminology that we are using - such as early intervention There is still confusion about what is meant by early intervention, complex families etc and where these sit in relation to the Lancashire continuum and Common Assessment Framework.

Adopting a completely different approach in working with families that is based on enabling and building resilience. We continue to deliver our services in a **done to** way that is either dictated by a statutory framework or guidance or relies on the belief of professional expertise to hold the answer to a family's difficulties. We must fundamentally challenge and change this to one of helping the family to understand their situation and needs and enabling them to take advantage of the support that may be available to them and be in control of their own destiny.

How can we do it?

Agreeing a shared 'vision' for service delivery to children, young people and their families

Through discussions with a wide range of partners, we have agreed a draft shared vision for the support and services we provide in Lancashire to children, young people and their families.

There was real consensus of opinion around the key elements to be included in a vision for a Children's Trust and also the more detailed conversations around the actions and priorities that will enable this to happen. The following vision statement attempts to capture this synergy in thinking across the partnership and articulate this consensus of views:

As the Children's Trust we will commit ourselves to doing everything that we can to help and support children and young people in Lancashire to have a positive future.

To do this we will adopt as our core belief;

A moral commitment to work in the best interests of children and young people and their families at all times and make a positive difference to their lives

To make this happen we will agree that:

- the views of children and young people and their carers are sought, listened to, taken into account, and acted upon;
- comprehensive information and advice on services available is swiftly and easily accessible to children, young people, families and all professionals;

- our approach is one of enabling children and young people and their families to identify, manage and seek out help to meet their own needs;
- services we all provide are generally accessible within everyday community settings such as children's centres, schools and GP surgeries etc;
- we systematically review and remove duplication across our services and make the most effective use of the total resource available to us – people, buildings, equipment or money;
- those children and young people and families who have higher levels of need will where possible receive their support from 1 or 2 lead individuals not multiple professionals;
- children and young people will be separately consulted and involved in decisions which affect them;
- we focus on improved outcomes rather than activity and processes, and monitor and hold each other to account for our progress towards them;
- we stop delivering or commissioning those services that do not demonstrably improve outcomes for children, young people and their families;
- we continue to focus on early intervention;
- information will always be shared between all professionals with permission and/or whenever any level of risk to a child or young person is present.

How and what will we do to make this happen?:-

How - Shared Locations

What

- We will review our total capital resources, and identify and agree a network of local hubs of multi-professional, public and community and voluntary services. We will link this with other similar work that is happening in Lancashire, in particular our work around 'Total Family'. Wherever possible, these local hubs will involve staff being based together and operating out of a universal provision such as a children's centre, school, health centre/GP surgery or Youth Zone. There will be differences in different parts of the county according to availability of accommodation, rurality, population size and needs.

How - Shared Information

What

- Utilising the existing 'Help Direct' model and the benefits of our new strategic partnership, we will create a comprehensive, shared one-stop shop information and advice service that is available to all children and young people and their families, and professionals. This service will be supported by all partners and will enable children, young people, families and those who work with them, to identify organisations that can give them help and support, and set out how to access them.
- We will enforce our information governance policy in a way that ensures professionals are aware of their duty to share information and that they have their organisation's commitment and backing to do so.
- We will support the wider development of information hubs across the county and eventually one shared data access portal.

How - Shared ownership

What

- We will work together to overcome any professional barriers that might get in the way of our vision – to work in the best interests of children and young people at all times.
- We will demonstrate our shared ownership of support for children young people and their families by changing our service delivery to fit this vision – moving people, places and processes to plan and deliver together.
- We will build consultation, engagement and involvement of children, young people, families and staff into the way we deliver our services and our vision.
- We will build the skills, understanding and confidence of individuals to enable effective integrated working using workforce development tools including the leadership framework.

How - Shared Pathways

What

- We will join up our assessment processes and live by the rule of ‘tell us once’
- We will develop agreed pathways to focus our support for vulnerable children and young people and their families. This will reflect a revised continuum of need and set out clear and shared roles and responsibilities at every stage.
- Our pathways will maintain a focus on minimising the number of staff involved with a family, listening to children and young people and their families, and helping them to have greater resilience in managing their problems towards better outcomes.

How - Shared Commissioning and Delivery

What

- We will remove duplication in planning and delivering our services to children, young people and families, and trust that the lead professionals will be able to speak and lead on behalf of all.
- We will combine our resources in an area to deliver in the most effective and cost efficient way.
- We will ensure that we provide a strategic framework that enables district children's trusts to embed shared working in a way that best meets the needs of children, young people and families within their locality.
- In any new venture, commission or service our starting point will be integrated delivery. We will need to be convinced by any plan to deliver through separate services.
- We will identify and share what works and leads to measurable improvements in the outcomes for children, young people and their families.
- We will not refuse advice to any child, young person or family as there will always be some way in which we can make a positive difference.

Further work will now need to take place to develop the action plan to support this new service delivery vision but if you have any comments please contact:

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