

Children and Young People Directorate

Quarter 3, 2009-10 Overview Report

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress within the directorate for the period ending 31st December 2009.

2.0 Key Developments

- 2.1 The following key developments have impacted on the work of the Directorate during the quarter;

- **Placement Strategy:** As part of the Children in Care Placement Strategy, the Executive Board has now agreed that payments to Foster Carers in Halton will significantly increase in September 2010. This should improve the ability to recruit and retain more carers. A revised marketing campaign is in place and will be launched in the New Year. (*Specialist Services Plan*)
- **Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET):** The NEET figures have significantly reduced over the past 12 months. There has also been an improvement in the number of young people in EET from vulnerable groups such as Care Leavers, YOT and Teenage mothers. The improvement is largely due to a range of actions agreed within the NEET Strategy. These include implementation of HBC apprenticeships scheme, more flexible college provision and improved partnership working with Job Centre Plus. (*Preventative Services Plan*)
- **SEN Provision:** Informal consultation completed on the proposals for the Primary SEN Unit Provision. Request approved by the Executive Board to being formal consultation. The Statutory Notice of the proposals will be published in January 2010 and formal consultation will begin. Schools with SEN Unit provision named in the proposal are: The Grange Infant and Junior Schools in conjunction with the BSF plans for The Grange to become an all through school, The Brow Primary, Palace Fields Primary, Oakfield Primary, Simms Cross Primary, Weston Point Primary, Westfield Primary and Woodside. Implementation is due September 2010. It is proposed to discontinue SEN Unit provision at Moore Primary and Weston Primary from 31st August 2011. (*Universal and Learning Services Plan*)
- **Building Schools for the Future:** The authority entered in the procurement phase of the BSF Programme in 2009. The Invitation to Proceed with Dialogue was issued on 23rd October 2009. Design, Partnering, Transformation, Legal, Finance, ICT, Planning and PE Sports and Culture meetings have been held with each bidder. On 21st December each bidder presented a summary of the journey they had undertaken to an audience of Head teachers and other School Staff, Governors, Trade Unions, Elected Members, Officers and Advisors. (*Business Support and Commissioning Plan*)

3.0 Emerging Issues

3.1 The following emerging issues have been identified and will have an impact on the work of the Directorate;

- **Statutory Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE) 2011:** On 5th November Ed Balls confirmed the governments' proposal to make PSHEE statutory from September 2011. Building on the recommendations of an independent review and following extensive public consultations PSHEE will become a statutory part of the national curriculum at primary and secondary level for all young people for the first time in 2011. (*Preventative Services Plan*)
- **Home Access:** This programme begins its phased rollout across England in January 2010. Initially the programme will target learners in years 3 to 9 where the child is on free school meals. Nationally the programme aims to benefit more than 270,000 households by March 2011. Schools are being encouraged to support parents/guardians with their applications for laptops. (*Business Support and Commissioning Plan*)
- **Social Work Taskforce:** The Social Work Taskforce published its final report in November 2009 detailing 15 recommendations for transforming Children's Social Work, which will have significant implications for work force development and how we manage front line services. (*Specialist Services Plan*)
- **The White Paper for Education:** The Local Authority preparation to meet the demands of the White Paper for Education will be a key development. A strategic plan will be produced in response to this ensure that we continue to effectively support our schools. (*Universal Learning Service Plan*)

4.0 Service Objectives / Milestones

4.1 The majority of service objectives within the directorate are being delivered as planned and most notably positive progress has been made in regards to;-

- Milestones in improving young people's sexual health are progressing well. A strategy and action plan has been developing well during the third quarter with specific and targeted activities undertaken within schools and colleges involving the mobile outreach bus (V-RMZ) to widen access to community based services. The Teen drop-in has also started to provide services within schools offering a range of services from a number of professionals. It is envisaged that this service will roll out to all secondary schools across Halton. (*Service Objective PS2*)
- Milestones towards improving Educational Outcomes for children at all stages continue to make progress. In particular, the system to manage schools at risk of formal categorisation. There is a comprehensive system in place in line with the local authorities strategy for supporting an intervention. The cross-service monitoring group provides a 'team around the school' approach and Single schools updates are held to support the

- Maintaining effective Safeguarding processes milestones are on track. A multi agency short life task group has been set up and is working on a review and update of the neglect protocol. The group will agree minimum standards by March 2010. (*Service Objective SS3*)
- Milestones measuring progress towards developing in an Integrated Children's Workforce are mixed however making progress. As part of the CWDC One Children's Workforce Tool there has been a focus specifically on integrated working and with a follow up questionnaire the response for which was the best in the North West. Additional actions were identified as a result and have been integrated into the OCWT action plan. (*Service Objective BSC3*)

Of those objectives that have not progressed as planned those of most concern at this stage are;

- Recruitment of an Independent Reviewing Manager who will take the lead on implementing a system of reviewing children in need plans has been delayed. Post holder is expected to be in post by April 2010 and post will be implemented by June 2010. (*Service Objective SS4*)
- The development of a Joint Intelligence and Commissioning Unit was postponed awaiting the outcome of the Efficiency Review, failing to meet the target date in the milestone. A proposal to establish a virtual joint commissioning unit with the PCT and St Helen's will presented to the Children's Trust Board in January 2010. (*Service Objective BSC4*)
- Due to the extension to the Locality Pilot, the milestones in relation to evaluating the pilot have been delayed. The evaluation is expected to be presented in January 2010 with a strategy to be developed from the findings of the evaluation. (*Service Objective PS1*)
- Mapping post-16 provision in Halton has been delayed. The 14-19 partnership and Halton Borough Council Executive Board have agreed to a Collegiate framework to deliver the 14-19 reforms, however a series of complex scenarios have arisen since the announcement of the reforms impacting on the timescale of completing the mapping. (*Service Objective ULS5*).

5.0 Performance Indicators / Targets

5.1 The majority of performance indicators within the directorate are on target and most notably positive progress has been made in regards to;-

- NI066 Performance continues to meet the high standard of 100% of Children in Care cases, which were reviewed within timescales. The national average for 2008/09 was 90.9% and as a result Halton's performance is regarded as excellent for this indicator. (*SS Plan*)
- NI117 NEET figures have continued to reduce during Q3 and although not meeting the target, has seen a 3.8 percentage point decrease than the reported figure for 2008/09. (*PS Plan*)

- ULS LI1 The number of requests made during Quarter 3 have continued to meet the targets and it is expected that this indicator will meet the target at the end of the year. (*ULS Plan*)
- BPR LI23 There has been a continued increase in the use of the Joint Planning & Commissioning Framework taking the value of services commissioned further past the target for the year. (*BSC Plan*)

Of those performance indicators within the directorate that are not on target those of most concern at this stage are;

- SSLI8 The volumes remain high in Children in Need teams affecting the percentage change in the number from the baseline. It is unlikely that we will see any significant reduction in cases until Localities are rolled out and earlier intervention is embedded. (*SS Plan*)
- As reported in Q2, a number of attainment indicators failed to meet the challenging targets that were set. Performance generally however resulted in higher performance than the national average. Where performance has seen a decrease on 2007/08 data it remains either in line or an increase on previous years. All performance is being addressed through a detailed analysis of the results and support plans for schools. (*ULS Plan*)