

REPORT TO: Children & Young People PPB
DATE: 3rd November 2008
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Children & Young People
SUBJECT: Q2 Performance Monitoring Reports
WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To provide an initial briefing on Quarter 2 Performance for Children's Services. Due to the timescale of the PPB meeting in this cycle the full reports will not be completed until just prior to the meeting. They will be circulated as soon as possible although it is likely they will not be ready until the last week in October.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

(1) The Board scrutinise progress against the Service Plans identified in this summary and the full reports which will be circulated prior to the meeting.

3.0 Summary

There are four service plans for Children's Services covering all aspects of the Directorate's work. Quarterly reports are prepared to update progress against these plans and reported to PPB. The summary attached is an early snapshot of progress during the quarter and the emerging issues that will impact in the future. More detail will be provided on all of the areas identified in the full report.

3.1 Universal and Learning Services

Key Developments

- *Leadership and Management:* A number of projects are ongoing with schools including establishment of a leadership hub, a comprehensive database of support information, and a leadership and management programme, which will cover the changing role of school leaders.
- *Inclusion:* There has been a co-location of staff involved in inclusive learning services with the School Improvement Team to ensure greater alignment.

- *School Performance:* Excellent GCSE results leading to an 18.3% increase in % achieving 5 A*-C over the last 2 years and a 15.9% increase in % achieving 5 A*-C including English & Maths in the same period

Emerging Issues

- *Inclusion:* Refocusing the use of under-utilised provision to ensure the needs of low incidence LDD within the mainstream setting. A more flexible resource is being provided based around the identified needs of the child.

3.2 Preventative Services

Key Developments

- *Locality Working:* A project plan has been developed to progress the co-ordination and delivery of services to children, young people and families on a locality basis across the Borough
- *MyPlace:* We have submitted a radical and innovative bid to secure investment of £2.5m to redesign and refurbish the Kingsway Health Building into a Youth Hub to be called 'The Buzz'.

Emerging Issues

- *PRU's/Alternative Provision:* DCSF published a white paper "Back on Track" in response to perception of the poor quality of alternative provision nationally. Provision in Halton appears to be very much along the lines of the models they are suggesting nationally but awaiting further guidance.
- *Child Poverty:* Halton has been successful in submitting an Expression of Interest for work focused services in Children's Centres. If successful, the bid will also attract around up to £100,000 per annum over a pilot period of 3 years.

3.3 Specialist Services

Key Developments

- *Targeted Support:* Principal Manager has been seconded to develop the integration of targeted support for vulnerable children. This will see the integration of Children in Need specialist services with Children's centres.
- *Safe Recruitment:* HSCB Safer Recruitment sub-group to ensure that all organisations working or in contact with children operate recruitment, supervision and management practices which take into account the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

Emerging Issues

- *Capacity Issues:* There has been increasing demand on Specialist Services over the last 18 months in two key areas; number of children in need cases and costs of placement for children in care. A detailed review is underway to identify the implications for the service.
- *Placement Strategy:* A strategy is being developed to look at ways of improving the supply of local foster carers.

3.4 Business Support and Commissioning

Key Developments

- *Children's Trust:* Proposals to develop the Alliance Board and rename it as the Children's Trust were agreed at the Board Meeting on the 3rd September. There is a statutory duty to have a Children's Trust as part of the Every Child Matters guidance to drive the integration of Children's Services. Membership of the Trust and the new Trust Executive Board were agreed and further work is required on the detail of the structure below these groups.

Emerging Issues

- *Complaints Consultation:* DCSF have issued a consultation document to review the process for dealing with complaints against schools. It is proposed to introduce a new independent body to review complaints that cannot be resolved by the school or the governing body. This is likely to have significant implications for Schools and the LA.
- *BSF:* The Strategy for Change Part 2 is the next major milestone in the Building Schools for the Future Programme and is due to be submitted to DCSF by the end of October.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No financial implications identified

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

No other implications have been identified.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The service plan monitoring systems supports work towards the priority on Children and Young People by ensuring robust monitoring of services.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

Not applicable.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Not applicable.

6.3 A Safer Halton

Not applicable.

6.4 Halton's Urban Renewal

Not applicable.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

A risk analysis has been completed against each of the Departmental Service Plans.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

The priorities identified in the service plan are targeted at reducing inequalities and ensuring the best outcomes for all children and young people in Halton with a particular focus on vulnerable groups.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

None