

APPENDIX 3 CONCURRENT REPORT FROM SOUTHWARK LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN

Background

1. In September 2003, the Government published the Every Child Matters Green Paper alongside its formal response to the Victoria Climbié Inquiry Report. The Green Paper proposed changes in policy and legislation to maximize opportunities and minimize risks for all children and young people, focusing services more effectively around the needs of children, young people and families. The Children Act 2004 (the Act) was a direct result of the consultation following the publication of the Green Paper, and gives effect to the proposals in the Green Paper to create clear accountability for children's services, to enable better joint working and to secure a better focus on safeguarding children.
2. The Act places a duty on local authorities to make arrangements through which key agencies acting as children's trusts co-operate to improve the well-being of children and young people and widen services' powers to pool budgets in support of this. Key agency partners to children's services are specified as the local authority, police, probation, youth offending teams, health authority and Primary Care Trust and the Learning and Skills Council for England, but there will be other partners such as voluntary sector organizations. The Act places a responsibility for key agencies to have regard to the need to safeguard children and promote their welfare in exercising their normal functions. It is thus clear that these responsibilities extend to services in relation to all children in an area, and not simply those children known to key agencies due to particular needs or problems.
3. S 18 Children Act 2004 requires local authorities to put in place a director of children's services to be accountable for, as a minimum, the local authority's education and social services functions in so far as they relate to children. S 19 requires the designation of a lead member for children's services to mirror the director's responsibilities at a local political level.
4. The Act states that the arrangements to be made by children's services authorities to improve the well-being of children in the authority's area must relate to:-
 - (a) physical and mental health and emotional well-being;
 - (b) protection from harm and neglect;
 - (c) education, training and recreation;
 - (d) the contribution made by them to society;
 - (e) social and economic well-being.

Children and Young People's Plan

5. S 17 Children Act 2004 requires children's services authorities to prepare and publish a Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) which must set out their

strategy for services for children and young people. The Government intends in its guidance that each area should produce a single, strategic, overarching plan for all services affecting children and young people. It is intended that there will be a single CYPP, not a local authority plan and a separate plan for partners.

6. The CYPP will need to be prepared with full consideration of equal opportunities issues. It must cover services for all those in the area aged 0 to 19, young people aged 20 and over leaving care, and young people up to the age of 25 with learning difficulties. Despite its breadth and coverage, the CYPP should not be detailed, but rather succinct and accessible.
7. The guidance issued by the Government lists the local authority services affecting children and young people which should be covered in the CYPP as:
 - a. Early years and extended schools and out-of-school child care
 - b. Education
 - c. Lifelong learning
 - d. Youth services
 - e. Children's social services
 - f. Planning and regeneration
 - g. Housing and registered social landlords
 - h. Play and leisure services
 - i. Traffic and transport
8. It will also cover:
 - a. Health and public health services for children and young people, including child and adolescent mental health and sexual health;
 - b. Advice and guidance for 14-19 year olds (including Connexions);
 - c. Services to tackle the misuse of drugs and alcohol;
 - d. Services provided by relevant youth justice agencies;
 - e. Voluntary and community services;
 - f. Education provided other than by the local authority.
9. The Regulations require the CYPP to cover:
 - a) improvements which the authority intends to make during the plan period to the outcomes for children and young people;
 - b) a local vision for children and young people;
 - c) an assessment of needs in relation to the outcomes;
 - d) priorities and key actions planned to achieve the outcomes;
 - e) a statement of how resources will be deployed to achieve the outcomes;
 - f) an explanation of how the plan relates to arrangements for performance management and review of services;
 - g) the arrangements for co-operation under the duty to co-operate with other partners; and
 - h) an explanation of how the CYPP is consistent with the strategic plans of local partners.

10. The CYPP is to be prepared by the local authority with its partners in the children's trust. It will need to link to the separate plans which partners will continue to draw up to cover the full range of services and assets for which they are responsible.
11. The first CYPP must be in place by **1 April 2006**. In order to permit flexibility in joint planning, the regulations do not define the duration of the CYPP, although the guidance states that a period of three financial years gives a good basis for medium to long term commissioning.
12. In drawing up the CYPP, the local authority must consult those partners covered by the duty to co-operate under the Act. In addition, the regulations require the authority to consult children, young people, parents and carers, Diocesan authorities, the local School Organisation Committee, the voluntary and community sector, and the Local Safeguarding Children Board (which has replaced the Area Child Protection Committee). The voluntary sector should therefore be actively involved in the preparation of the CYPP. The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 requires public authorities to ensure that children and young people with disabilities are involved in the development and delivery of policy. Children and young people with a range of impairments should be consulted as needs will vary.
13. The CYPP must be published. The regulations require the local authority to place it on their website, and put copies in public libraries and other local outlets.
14. The CYPP should be reviewed annually to assess progress and consider whether needs have changed.

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