

This report may be of interest to: all Members of the Community Learning Committee; Family of Committees; Environment Committee and Policy and Resources Committee.

SUMMARY UPDATE AND REVIEW 1999 - 2001 OF THE MILTON KEYNES COMMUNITY CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES PLAN 1998 - 2001

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1. Purpose

1.1 To present the Summary Review and Update Plan 2000-2001

2 Summary

2.1 The first MK Community Children and Young People's Services Plan 1998-2001 was submitted to the Secretary of State on 1 April 1997 and covered all services for children and young people in Milton Keynes. The second, annual Update and Review which is in summary form has been circulated separately to Members of the Committee.

3 Recommendations

3.1 The Committee is asked to:

- (i) approve the Summary Update and Review Plan 2000-2001 of the Milton Keynes Community Children and Young People's Services Plan 1998-2001; and
- (ii) note that no plan will be issued in 2000/01, pending guidance from the Department of Health, and discussions with partners and young people.

4. Background

- 4.1 Each local authority, responsible for Children's Social Services, is required to submit to the Department of Health, a three year Services Plan, supplemented by an annual document which evaluates progress and re-sets outcomes for the remaining period.
- 4.2 The first Community Children and Young People's Services Plan was produced in April 1998. It represented the commitment of Milton Keynes Council and partner agencies, to work with children and young people to improve their opportunities and quality of life.
- 4.3 The Plan this year is the second review of work to date. It has been produced as a summary of activities in response to comment that this would help people understand progress. Previous reports have been much more detailed. Much of the work listed is also covered by other plans, which the Council and its partners are now required to produce.
- 4.4 In 1998 the Children and Young People's Services Plan was unusual in being a statutory plan for children and young people. It is now but one of a significant number. These plans are listed at the end of the Summary, together with details of whom to contact if readers want to follow up an interest in a particular area.
- 4.5 The Department of Health is currently looking at the future of Children's Services Plans because there are now so many for this age range. The new guidelines will be available later this year which will clearly define what is to be included in subsequent plans. In the meantime, the Council is taking the opportunity locally of thinking through with partners and with young people how best their interests can be represented.
- 4.6 The work in the future will build on a significant number of achievements to date. Since this is a summary document it was not possible to include everything that has been accomplished during the year that affects children and young people. Colleagues were asked to identify their best or most significant achievement, together with the main ones where progress has been delayed or where, for example, additional resources may be necessary to undertake the work.

5. Issues and Choices

- 5.1 The Department of Health acknowledged the plethora of required plans, and gave local authorities the discretion to choose this year whether to have a Children and Young People's Services Plan.
- 5.2 The decision to publish a summary document was taken by Council Members and key partner members who sit on the wide-ranging Consultative Board. The Board, established in February '97, meets quarterly and continues to support and monitor the plan. Two young people are members of the Board. Members felt that the plan was a key document promoting both the 'whole' needs approach and integrated services for children and young people. It reflects the main issues for them, in health, education, social inclusion and childcare, both universally and particularly for those cared for by the Council.

- 5.2 The format of the Plan has changed, with new headings – Families, Early Years, School-aged Children, Young People and General – that were suggested to make the document more accessible to children and young people themselves. The headings were also introduced as a pilot to see whether they would be suitable for the next three year plan.

6 Implications

6.1 Environmental

The Summary Update and Review reflects the continuing contribution the Environment Directorate makes to children and young people, both in schools and externally.

6.2 Equalities

Equality and anti-discrimination are integral to all the Plans identified in the Summary. Activities that address related issues are monitored in them.

6.3 Financial

It has not been possible to include a financial profile of expenditure on children and young people's services in the Summary Plan. Some of the plans identified in it contain financial profiles, others do not.

6.4 Legal

Legal requirements, related to statutory services, can be found in some of the plans in the Summary Plan.

6.5 Staff and Accommodation

Accommodation for current and new staff remains problematic, but one which is being addressed.

7 Conclusions

- 7.1 This Summary Review and Update Plan captures the Council's commitment, and those of its partners, to children and young people and working with them in meaningful fora. It recognises and promotes the vital importance of childhood and adolescence as part of life not solely a preparation for adulthood. It describes the inter-agency vision of providing improved services in new, integrated ways. It high-lights a few of the considerable achievements, whilst recognising some delayed progress.

Background Papers: MK Community Children and Young People's Service Plan 1998-2001

The Learning Vision (Learning and Development Directorate)