

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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### **CHILDREN, FAMILIES & EDUCATION - VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND PARTNERSHIPS POLICY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a meeting of the Children, Families & Education - Vulnerable Children and Partnerships Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 29th June, 2010.

PRESENT: Mrs A D Allen (Chairman), Mrs P T Cole, Mr H J Craske, Mr S Manion, Mr K Smith, Mr M Robertson (Substitute) (Substitute for Mr M J Vye), Mr D L Brazier (Substitute) (Substitute for Mr A H T Bowles) and Mr R Brookbank (Substitute) (Substitute for Mr M J Northey)

CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES: Dr D Wadman

PARENT GOVERNORS: Mr P Myers

TEACHER ADVISERS: Mrs J Huckstep

PRESENT: Mr L B Ridings, Deputy Cabinet Member

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms H Davies (Director For Specialist Children's Services Group), Mrs J Wainwright (Director Commissioning (Specialist Services)), Ms J Hook (Policy Officer), Hornsby (Policy Officer), Mrs P Huntingford (Director Policy, Performance & Quality Assurance), Mrs J Wiles (Policy Officer, Kent Children's Trust & Health) and Mrs C A Singh (Democratic Services Officer)

#### **UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

##### **29. Minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2010** *(Item A3)*

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2010 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

##### **30. Deputy Cabinet Member (Vulnerable) and Director of Specialist Children's Services Verbal Update** *(Item B1)*

*(Verbal update by Mr Ridings, Deputy Cabinet Member for Vulnerable children and Ms H Davies, Director of Specialist children's Services and Mrs J Wainwright, Director of Commissioning and Partnerships)*

(1) The Chairman asked Ms Davies to begin with her verbal report. Ms Davies gave a brief update on the position of the CFE Restructuring advising that she and colleagues were currently interviewing for the 12 posts of Preventative Services Manager. This post would drive the development of the early intervention through bringing together all relevant agencies.

(2) The Committee noted that the Special Educational Needs Review had started and would include all provision. The Review would be completed in the Autumn and the initial findings reported to Cabinet in September.

(3) Ms Davies advised of the ongoing increase in Looked After children (LAC), which had increased by 30 in the last quarter, the struggle to keep those within in-house placements and having to place some of those children in the independent sector.

(4) In response to the Mr Gilroy's, former Chief Executive of KCC, Safeguarding Review, Ms Davies explained that work was underway to address the recommendations and would be reported to the October County Council meeting.

(5) Ms Davies was pleased to inform the Committee that 60 newly qualified Social Workers had been appointed and would be in post by September. She gave assurances that they would receive an induction and support from senior staff.

(6) Ms Davies explained that the coalition Government review on child protection by Eileen Munro would be looking at reducing the bureaucracy of the social workers' role. Kent would be looking at the Review's Terms of Reference with staff to look at the ways we deliver Social Work in Kent.

(7) Members were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions which included the following:

(8) Mr Robinson said on behalf of Mr Vye, who sent his apologies for this meeting, that he would prefer summaries of the items in the verbal update rather than bullet points in future and sought a response on Minute 26 (5). Ms Davies noted the first comment and advised that the Chairman and Leaders of the Opposition would be advised of serious case reports in the future unless there were legal implications that prevented this.

(9) In response to a follow up question, Ms Davies advised that part of the CFE Directorate restructuring involved the Children's Centres being line managed from the Autumn of this year by the Preventative Services Managers. The Specialist Services Group were also reviewing the specifications for the Children's Centres, being mindful of the budgetary constraints that were likely to take place in April 2011 and the coalition government's message that they anticipate that Children's Centres would become a more targeted service. The review would conclude in the Autumn.

(10) In reply to questions by Mr Smith, Ms Davies explained that there were 27 social workers recruited from the United States of America and 25 from Europe. Of the 60 newly qualified social workers the vast majority qualified from the University of Kent and Christchurch, Canterbury. For the future, there were 2 schemes being restarted enabling 10 or 12 social workers assistants to qualify through the Open University route per annum and the setting up of a trainee social work scheme with the aim to recruit 10 or 12 trainee social workers for a year, followed by a 2 year course. If those two schemes were successful she anticipated that they would continue and even expand them as she felt that growing our own social workers had to be the way for the future.

(11) In reply to the second question, Ms Davies said that the uncertainty for staff across the County Council had been difficult. There were challenges in how the policies of the coalition government developed. The challenge in her Group was to develop a vision of how they wanted children's services to be delivered, and in the coming years, as there were budget reductions, tailor that accordingly.

(12) In response to a follow up question, Ms Davis assured Mr Smith that she did have enough political direction from KCC. There was important work that would be covered over the Summer and Autumn of this year through working closely with Mrs Hohler, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education and Mr Ridings, Deputy Cabinet Member, Vulnerable Children with an emphasis on early intervention services to minimise children requiring social work services. Work was also being carried out on rethinking how social work services were delivered to reduce the bureaucracy for social workers enabling them to do social work and to feel better supported.

(13) In response to a follow up question by the Chairman, Ms Davies advised that the recommendations in Mr Gilroy's report would be dovetailed with the various reviews being undertaken.

(14) In response to a question by Mr Craske, Ms Davies advised that when the 60 social workers came on stream there would be approximately 60 vacancies, which needed to be put in the context that the social work establishment had been increased significantly during the latter part of 2009. The challenge would be; do we recruit more social workers or do we recruit staff with other qualifications to work in social work teams? Ms Davies felt that there was creative potential through not considering that all posts had to be filled with qualified social workers; there were different ways to deliver our services.

(15) In response to a question by Mr Robinson, Ms Davies stated she was satisfied that there were clear supervisory policies in place in Kent for social worker assistant posts, and an audit process where the District Managers audited that staff were being supervised appropriately and were given a workload that was appropriate to their level of experience.

(16) In reply to a question by Dr Wadman, Ms Davies said that there had been significant referrals to Children's Social Services every week and a number of those referrals were not at the threshold of Children's Social Services. The vast majority of those children would have a level of need, as they had been referred. Ms Davies felt that the challenge that needed to be grasped was what were the whole range of services available in every district for children. The new post of Preventative Services Manager would ensure that those services in a district were well coordinated to help vulnerable children. This would ensure that a rational decision would be made about those children that would require social services. Ms Davies said that work was being carried out to refine the process for a single point of access, which existed in some districts now, so that it was clear which service a child with a level of need accessed, to stop the cycle of referrals being made that do not meet the threshold.

(17) The Chairman then asked Mr Ridings to give his verbal update. Mr Ridings commended the efforts made in recruiting the 60 social workers. He concurred with Ms Davies statement about ensuring that the supervisory programme and support were adequate to meet the needs of the social work career with proper progression

so that they stayed in Kent rather than leaving and going elsewhere. He advised that there were different issues in recruitment in each district. He stated that there would be no compromise in the quality of social work that was presented in this authority. He did not feel that this would be done in the same way as in the past 20 years; there would be different and improved ways of handling the service and hopefully at a lesser cost. He then went on to mention the ICS data inputting system where he felt there were too many people from Children's Social Services spending a disproportionate amount of time keying in data for the governments returns, although this had been getting better with the number of mistakes falling from 60k in April 2009 to a significant lower number in 2010. Other systems and providers had been looked at but there was an enormous cost from changing from one system to another.

(18) Mr Ridings had tabled the following information to the Committee. "Current monitoring of Children Social Services actual expenditure indicates there will be an overspend of £2million for the financial year 10/11. The major constituent parts of this overspend have been generated by the fostering and 16 plus service. The volume of children and young people needing to access foster placements and the 16 plus service has been far above our original predictions. Also, the adverse mix between in-house fostering and Independent Fostering Agencies has added to the fostering overspend".

(19) Mrs Wainwright was then invited to give her verbal update. Mrs Wainwright focused on the restructure and re-organisation within Children, Families and Education and progress with developing the new Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP). This included an update on the current position with recruitment into the new CFE structures, and the need for induction, staff development, and team building/re-building. She advised that within these processes there would need to be a change from a culture where services were reliant on grant funding to one of securing the best outcomes through integrated working and a greater focus on drawing the Kent Children's Trust partners into joint commissioning arrangements.

(20) Mrs Wainwright then gave an overview of the timelines involved in developing the new CYPP from 2011 - 2014 and a summary of progress to date, copies of a timeline chart were tabled.

(21) Members were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions which included the following:

(22) In response to a question by Mr Smith, Mrs Wainwright advised that there had been Member input during the Senior Management Team meetings held within Children, Families and Education (CFE) Directorate through looking at the Directors written rationale, which included what they wished to change, whether it stacked up, were we doing the right thing, was it conservative or radical, so that the structure met the needs of the young people, bearing in mind the reductions in the budget and grants. She said that there had been changes of minds when looking at the options in detail. The Directors had to look at the range of posts within their Groups and across CFE to determine the best use of staff. All agreed that the Preventative Services Manager posts would be critical to success. There were also risk analyses made. Ms Wainwright stated that monitoring of the new structure would be through the managerial processes. Each manager would have to monitor that there were no gaps working through the structure looking at what was wrong

and putting that right, making adjustments to ensure that the Business Plans were being met or there would be an impact on the performance indicators. Staff needed to be clear of their responsibilities. She concluded that this could not be definitive as the full impact of the coalition government's changes was not known.

(23) The Chairman asked that the CFE restructure be kept on this Committee's agenda for progress reports.

(24) RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the responses to Members questions be noted;
- (b) the CFE restructure be kept on this Committee's agenda for progress reports;
- (c) the verbal updates be accompanied with a summary of the items rather than bullit points in future; and
- (d) the verbal update be noted.

### **31. Draft Minutes of the Children's Champions Board - 19 May 2010**

*(Item B2)*

(1) In response to a question by Mr Robinson, Ms Davis said that she would be interviewing for the Virtual Head Teacher post for Looked After Children (LAC).

(2) The Chairman requested a presentation on the role of the Virtual Head Teacher when the appointed had been made.

(3) The Chairman said that she was pleased that the Board were joined by Scott King a former Looked After Child who took an active part at the meeting.

(4) The Chairman wished to formally thank Kay Weiss for being an outstanding officer and a true champion of young people and sent best wishes in her future post.

(5) RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the responses to questions and comments made by Members and the Minutes be noted; and
- (b) a presentation be given on the role of the Virtual Head Teacher, when they had been appointed, at a future meeting of this Committee be noted.

### **32. Kent Contact and Assessment Centre - Abandonment Rate**

*(Item B3)*

*(Report by Mr G Gibbens, Cabinet Member, Adult Social Services and Mr O Mills, Managing Director, Kent Adult Social Services)*

*(Mrs P Huntingford, Transforming Social Care Lead Officer was present for this item)*

(1) The Committee considered a report on the level of abandoned calls experienced at Kent Contact & Assessment Service (KCAS) and the measures that were in place to mitigate this.

(2) Mrs Huntingford introduced the report highlighting the key issues.

(3) Members were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments which included the following:

(4) In reply to a question by Mr Craske, Mrs Huntingford explained what an abandoned call was saying; the panel in front of the telephonist told them how many calls were waiting and how many callers put their phone down. The system records the speed at which that abandoned call took place. So as well as having the weekly data of the number of calls, at which the percentage was arrived from, the pace at which people choose to abandon a call, over time, as this was a new system, would be possible to track, whether there were certain points in the day when the calls were abandoned quicker and where the peaks and troughs in those calls coming in were. She added that 15% of calls were abandoned in 45-50 seconds. The system was not sophisticated enough to identify whether they were repeat callers. Intuitively when there were calls from Kent operational teams, colleagues from the Primary Care Trusts and General Practitioners it was likely that they would not hang on the phone if they did not get an immediate response to move on to do something else and try later.

(5) In response to a follow up question, Mrs Huntingford said that there was a wish from Members for there to be a single point of access for as many of the County Council's callers as possible and the Children, Families and Education Directorate to feel that this was right where it was appropriate for them to take on certain responsibilities. As part of the review there would be some close debate and scrutiny on which circumstance it would be appropriate for Contact Kent to deal with and which may be left to more highly trained specialist in service directorates to deal with. There was a programme of training to up skill staff in Contact Kent so that they were better able to respond to the lower level of enquiry about information and advise about a service's activity, there were calls that were passed to KCAS that had nothing to do with either Children and Families or Adults Social Services.

(6) In response to a comment by Mr Robinson, Mrs Huntingford confirmed that the Social Care Reform Grant of £144k would not be available from April 2011 and there was no expectation that the Department of Health would make any more funding available even though most adult services across the country had not achieved the changes that were required under the new 'Putting People First Agenda'. Kent had been at the forefront of those changes and was confident that it would meet all the milestones but there were concerns as to how the services that had enabled it to do that were being currently funded from within the Reform Grant were going to be sustained beyond April 2011. For this to be sustainable the funding would have to be taken from the base budgets in the longer term unless a more efficient way can be found to continue the service especially in the current economic climate. Mr Robinson requested that the CFE Budget IMG be kept appraised on this matter.

(7) In response to a comment by Mr Brookbank, Mrs Huntingford said that the demand increased year on year so even if you removed the call from the CFE Directorate the external demand increases you would not necessarily be making a saving because there was a need to resource meeting that increasing demand. She mentioned the growing impact of the closure of the reception points which meant that those calls went elsewhere either to Contact Kent or KCAS. The primary objective was to lower the abandoned call rate.

(8) The Chairman requested an aid Memoire for Members to indicate where they should direct enquiries for their local community.

(9) RESOLVED that:

- (a) the CFE Budget IMG be kept appraised on the impact of losing the Social Care Reform Grant;
- (b) an aid Memoire for Members indicating Key contact points be set up; and
- (c) the comments and the responses to questions by Members be noted.

### **33. Kent Young Carers' Strategy Annual Update**

*(Item B4)*

*(Report by Ms H Davies, Director of Specialist Children's Services and Mrs S Hohler, Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education Directorate)*

*(Ms A Hornsby, Policy Officer and Mrs J Wainwright, Director Commissioning and Partnerships Group were present for this Item)*

(1) The Committee viewed a short video in which young carers voiced their feelings about being a carer for a loved one. This was closed to the public to preserve the identity of the young people.

(2) The Committee considered a report that highlighted national development activities during 2009-10 and the recent consultation with young carers and the next steps in that process.

(3) Ms Hornsby felt that from a national perspective this was a good time for carers as the issues that surround them had been picked by a number of national streams of work. This included 'Think Family' which was the overarching approach towards the integration of Children and Families within the support of services from Adult and Children's Services and within that work Central Government and the Association of Directors of Children Social Services and Adult Social Services had issued the Memorandum of Good Practice for Young Carers. The Memorandum mirrored the work that Kent 2009.

(4) Ms Hornsby mentioned the comments from the young carers on their position in school being torn between their desire to tell about their position as a carer and the fear that if they release the information what would happen in their lives that they could not control. Working closely with schools had helped young carers to seek support. The National Healthy Schools Enhanced Model now included the

requirement to consider young carers as part of the social and emotional wellbeing aspect of 'Healthy Schools'. This would provide a clear pathway into schools. There was a range of support for young carers provided through the partnership with voluntary organisations. This included support ranging from respite care, residential activities, weekly meetings and weekly tailored support for those young carers most in need.

(5) Consultation with young carers had been commissioned to look at what work still needed to be carried out to deliver the strategy. There had also been work carried out with professionals to increase their understanding of the issues faced by young carers but this needed to continue. Mrs Hornsby said that this dialogue needs to continue with young carers to monitor the impact of the strategy.

(6) Members were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments which included the following:

(7) In response to a question by Mr Craske, Ms Hornsby advised that all the young people should be in school and that was why there was a need to work closely with schools to help young people feel confident about talking about their caring status and coming forward and sharing that information. Very good partnerships had been forged with the Voluntary Sector Organisations and local schools that was enabling the identification of more young carers. This work needed to progress at a pace that the schools and young carers were comfortable with. Young carers were clear that they did not want to feel pressurised in talking about their caring status.

(8) In reply to a question regarding paragraph 2.4, page 22, of the report by Mr Robinson, Mrs Wainwright advised that there were around 600-700 children home educated in Kent. For some parents and children home education was a very successful choice. For young carers home education may be a pragmatic choice to enable them to exercise their carer's responsibilities but may not be in their best interests.

(9) In reply to a follow up question, Mrs Wainwright explained that it was difficult to give a figure of how many young carers there were being home educated as the local authority's right to examine the quality of the education they were receiving was very limited and therefore the local authority may not know if the young person was a carer or not. Mr Robinson said that this was an area of concern and the local authority should do all it could to ensure that young people were receiving the best education at home as possible.

(10) In reply to a question by Mr Smith, Ms Hornsby advised that the guidance was not yet available regarding the National Healthy Schools Framework and the expectations of Academies and Free Schools. It was accepted that young carers will do better in school if they are well supported and all good schools would endorsed this.

(11) In a follow up question, Ms Hornsby said that there would be opportunities to share good practice with the Academies and the Free Schools and there were a range of materials that could be offered to schools to support them.

(12) In response to a question by the Chairman, Ms Hornsby advised that most young carers were in school so the local voluntary sector organisations would hold assemblies to raise awareness with primary and secondary schools. Through the

curriculum there were other opportunities to discuss issues caring activities through Person, Social, and Health Education (PSHE). There were leaflets that were available to young people. Young people could self refer to Young Carers organisations and there was a connection through the Youth and Community website for young people to young carers' organisations.

(13) In reply to a question by Mr Myers who referred to paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 on page 23, Ms Hornsby stated that there was a lack of clarity on funding streams and this would become clearer after the Comprehensive Spending Review in September. Ms Davies added that there would be increased clarity on funding by the Autumn on the Central Government Funding and the Directorates base budget to determine the effect on services.

(14) RESOLVED that:

- (a) the responses to questions by Members and their comments be noted;
- (b) the Minutes on this report from this meeting be used as part of the presentation to the Kent Children's Trust Board to express the committees concerns; and
- (c) the report be noted with thanks.

#### **34. Update on work of Parenting Team and Issues Arising**

*(Item B5)*

*(Report by Mrs J Wainwright, Director of Commissioning and Partnerships Group and Ms H Davies, Director of Specialist Children's Services Group)*

*(Ms J Hook, Lead Manager for Supporting Parents was present for this Item)*

(1) The Committee considered a progress report on the work of the Parenting Team and some of the issues facing the agenda. It also illustrated the nature and funding of the Team and risks associated with a focus on the "parenting programmes and practitioner development" work strand of the Team. The report had also been considered by Children, Families and Education SMT and the Commissioning and Partnerships DMT.

(2) The Chairman asked Ms Hook to introduce the report. Ms Hook highlighted key issues within the report which included the following; the delivery of parenting sat in the Priority 3 of the Kent Children 2008-11 and Young People's Plan to ensure that good quality parenting programmes were available to help parents in their role. This laid out a vision with 3 key components:

- **Availability** of programmes for families, when they needed them and where they could access them;
- **Quality**, a key issue to ensure that that families in Kent get good intervention in what really helps them support their children and move their family to a place of harmony and most critically where we are reducing safeguarding concerns; and
- **Need**, ensuring that the programmes were in place with the right levels of need, including behaviour, attachment, mental health,

domestic violence or postnatal depression ensuring that the right configuration of programmes available with the best quality of staff delivering them.

(3) Ms Hook said that her Team had been; facilitating the access of free places for up to 90 Practitioners, which had given them the capacity to reach an additional 1350 parents, troubleshooting delivery issues as they had been uncoordinated in the past by working out new and innovative ways to pull the structure together; setting up Parenting Practitioner Fora across the Districts so that local Practitioners could plan who they needed and work on who they needed to train, pooling together their resources and deliver the programmes, and responding to the national agenda ensuring that they had trained facilitators and were piloting 'Working with Parents' level 3 qualification, there were currently 30 people studying for this qualification through Adult Education funded by the KCC. The Children's Workforce Development Council had approached the Team to offer places for Children Centres outreach Workers to train for the qualification.

(4) The Team also offered parenting programmes for parents with children aged 8 to 13 years at risk of antisocial behaviour, a government funded initiative which would end in April 2011.

(5) Ms Hook explained that she had commissioned a cost benefit analysis on Parenting Programmes. A similar piece of work has been carried out by the London School of Economics nationally. This had given a clearer idea of the balance of effectiveness against the cost waiting in Kent and that challenges and appropriate support were being made especially where programmes were being funded but were not as effective as they were costly.

(6) Ms Hook advised that in terms of base budget funding, there was Ms Hook and her team consisted of a Supporting Parents Officer and 6 other members of staff, 4 of whom were funded directly by the 'Think Family' grant. One of them played the role of a Senior Parenting Coordinator [DCSF called a Parenting Expert]. This role was used as a coordinator building up knowledge of programmes and supporting the local structures. There were also 3 Parenting Early Intervention Coordinators in place, who had been solely delivering role on role off programmes in their areas since April 2009 working with 95 parents between them and 124 children. There was also a Respect Senior Parenting Practitioner funding through the Respect agenda generally with the same role working directly through Thanet District Council.

(7) Members were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments which included the following:

(8) In response to questions by Mr Smith, Ms Hook advised that there had been research undertaken on the programmes that were used by being put through a series of random controlled trials and at the same time the National Institute for Clinical Excellence had conducted a study and found that 11 out of 15 case studies of parents who had been on Parenting Course had made successful long term changes. Because in the past there had been a less coordinated approach the next task was to agree a common set of evaluation in that way the agreed data set was collected and would be able to link back parents back to children for a much clearer family focused assessment to ensure that those were the right programmes for those families. She gave examples of programmes; 'Incredible Years' for conduct

disorder and attachment issues and 'Mellow Parenting' used by Social Workers and CAHMS, that had been highly tested and were proven programmes that worked. In terms of sustainability there had been discussions on commissioning arrangements about parenting. She would like to see an agreement on a virtual service coordinated which meant that there would need to be clarity on job descriptions and clear agreements from managers and expectations set out and agreed about staff roles/tasks and how that would be carried out.

(9) In response to a question by Mr Manion, Ms Hook explained that needs analysis had been undertaken on development and where the services needed to be enhanced locally. The Department of Education had released the grant conditions around the existing early intervention and parenting services, which meant that the service could be widened and there was more flexibility on how the service could be delivered. Needs analysis would be undertaken in the near future to look at how best to use the resource we had now in the interim period. If resource continues there would be thought given to whether the focus was on delivery or focus on coordination across areas. Ms Davies added that the new post of Preventative Services Managers would be involved in ensuring that every district had a range of Parenting Programmes and ensure that there were sufficient staff and parent helpers as appropriate trained in each district of the County.

(10) Mr Ridings stated some concerns that he had with the programmes saying that he felt that 8-13years old was very late in terms of age in intervening with parents as parents would have had 8 years to cause trouble and suggested that the children's Centres be used more and the unpaid parents within those Centre's too with training. He advised that he had visited 2 Children's Centres where he observed young parents who were very keen to learn what parenting was about to look after their children's needs and a group of parents who were having left their work in their early thirties to have a family were equally ignorant in their parenting skills as the young parents and he was impressed how they were learning from the 17-18 year old parents. He felt that there was an untapped resource which needed to be looked into with the aid of the Preventative Services Managers.

(11) Mr Smith stated that there was an immerging collection of grants that may stop in April 2011 and requested that officer bring a report back to this committee at an appropriate meeting. The Chairman agreed and said that she had noted this as a concern to be considered by the CFE IMG Budget.

(12) RESOLVED that:

- (a) the responses to Members questions and comments be noted;
- (b) a report be submitted to this Committee at a future meeting on the effect of the grant funding reductions and any subsequent review of existing services be noted; and
- (c) the good progress that had been made by the parenting team be noted.

**35. New Statutory Guidance for Kent Children's Trust and Children and Young People's Plan**  
(Item B6)

*(Report by Mrs J Wainwright, Director Commissioning and Partnerships Group, Mrs R Turner, Managing Director, Children, Families & Education Directorate and Mrs S Hohler, Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education)*

*(Mrs J Wainwright, Director Commissioning and Partnerships Group and Mrs J Wiles, Policy Officer, Kent Children's Trust & Health was present for this Item)*

(1) The Committee Considered a report on the new statutory guidance for Children's Trusts and the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) and Kent's response.

(2) Mrs Wainwright introduced the report explaining that there had been changes since the Statutory Guidance was published March 2010. The current political stance of the Coalition government was permissive of Children's Trusts and CYPP and had less desire than the previous government to make the Trust and the Plan compulsory. Within the County Council there was continued enthusiasm and commitment from the County Council's Partners, Cabinet, Kent Partnership, for the direction of travel that the Kent Children's Trust was now going through and in particular for the change to twelve district teams and the Local Children's Trust Boards and the review of the CYPP and the key linkages to the new Vision for Kent. She then drew Members attention to paragraph 4.2 page 33 of the report in 'Stage 1 Needs Assessment' a preliminary list of 7 areas of greatest need; Emotional and Mental Health, Healthy start in life, Safeguarding, Primary aged children's learning, Adolescent engagement, Housing/accommodation and Family Poverty, which were likely to be the priorities in the new CYPP to be produced by April 2011 and different from the current arrangements the fact that this plan had to be costed across multi agency partners.

(3) In reply to a comment by the Chairman, Mrs Wainwright advised that the CYPP would also be produced as a version for children which was carried out for the existing Plan.

(4) Mr Smith stressed his concerns regarding the workability of the structure and the amount of meetings that multi agency partners had to attend and suggested that with the new CYPP this was an opportunity to stand back and simplify the structure to allow the various partners to do their jobs rather than attend meetings. He then requested a chart detailing of all the organisations involved in Children's Services. The Chairman added that there had been a request from the young people that attended the Children's Champions Board for the structures to be as simple as possible.

(5) RESOLVED that:

- (a) the responses to Members questions and comments be noted;
- (b) the request for a chart detailing all the organisations involved Children's Services be noted and sent to all Members of this POSC outside the meeting; and
- (c) agreement be given to further reports being submitted to this POSC on the development of Kent Children's Trust and the new Children and Young People's Plan 2011-2014.

### **36. Select Committee - Update**

*(Item C1)*

*(Report by Mr P Wickenden, Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager)*

(1) Members considered a report on the progress of the Select Committee on Extended Services and the request for suggestion of future topics for the Select Committee Review Programme.

(2) Mr Smith spoke as a Member of the Select Committee for Extended Services expressing his view of the timing of the Select Committee Review coinciding with the Children, Families and Education Directorate restructure. He advised that the message that was coming from the evidence gathering the Committee carried out included that External Services added real value, that there were likely to be budgetary cuts to the service, it was more likely to be sustainable if 4-5 schools grouped together.

(3) Members raised their concerns regarding the impact that any cuts to the Extended Services would have for vulnerable children and were anxious to raise their concerns as a matter of urgency. The Chairman said that she would refer the matter to Mr Burgess, Chairman of the Select Committee and Mr Ridings, Deputy Cabinet Member.

(4) RESOLVED that:

(a) the comments and questions raised by Members, be noted

(b) the progress of the Select Committee for External Services be noted and the concerns of the Committee regarding the impact of any cuts to External Services would have on vulnerable children be referred to Mr Burgess, Chairman of the Select Committee and Mr Ridings, Deputy Cabinet Member by the Chairman; and

(c) Members of the Committee agreed to advise the Democratic Services Officer of any items that they would like to suggest for inclusion in the Select Committee topic review programme outside the meeting be noted.