

To: Communities Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee

By: Mike Hill, Cabinet Member for Community Services and
Amanda Honey, Managing Director, Communities
Directorate

Date: 9 July 2010

Subject: A Hidden Harm Strategy for Kent

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:

This paper presents the final draft of a Hidden Harm Strategy with a focus on delivering improvements in outcomes for children and young people who are affected by their parent or carers drug and alcohol misuse. The Strategy has been developed by the multi agency Hidden Harm Working Group and has been subject to extensive consultation. The Hidden Harm Strategy will impact positively on outcomes for children and families through coordinated interagency partnerships and joined up front line delivery as required by the National Drugs Strategy and Think Family approach.

FOR COMMENT AND ENDORSEMENT

1. Introduction

1.1 Improving outcomes for children and young people who are affected by drug and alcohol misuse by their parents or carers requires a strategic response that translates into coordinated interagency partnerships and effective, frontline service delivery. To achieve this, the Strategy attached at Appendix One has been developed and driven through a multi agency Hidden Harm Working Group which feeds into the Kent Safeguarding Board through its Chair, the Director of Community Support Services, in Communities.

1.2 Members of this Committee were consulted on an early draft in March 2009, and this was followed by extensive consultation with a wide range of professionals who work in children, young people and adult services as well as with service users. The final draft strategy will be presented at Kent Children's Trust Board and Cabinet in July 2010 for approval. Periodic reports on action and progress will be brought to this Committee.

2. Implementation programme

2.1 Launch

Three launches are planned which will mirror the structure of Local Safeguarding Boards in Kent and will bring together practitioners and managers from adult treatment services, children young people's and family

services, service users and academics to build their knowledge and identify how their practice can be improved.

2.2 Action Plan

An action plan has been developed and progress has already been achieved through the Hidden Harm Working Group and the Family Services Development Officer in KDAAT.

2.3 Needs Assessment

A needs assessment has been undertaken and demonstrates the poor quality of recording around this issue. Improvements are being made. The needs assessment will be reported to the Safeguarding Board and into the Children and Young People's Needs Assessment process.

2.4 Information Sharing Protocol

Information sharing agreements already exist between children and adult mental health services. We aim to build on this protocol to ensure a universal response to ensuring joined up services for children and young people's and adult services.

3. **Resource Implications**

3.1 Services relating to Young People's Drug and Alcohol commissioning will be subject to review within emerging financial frameworks. Options are being considered to manage and mitigate the impact on service delivery should there be a reduction in funding levels.

Recommendations

3.2 Members of the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to endorse the attached Kent Hidden Harm Strategy and note that reports on progress will be the subject of future agendas.

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