

By: Bill Anderson, Director Children's Social Services

To: Children's Champions Board

24 September 2008

Subject: AIMING HIGH PATHFINDER PROGRAM

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: The report summarises the new government initiative 'Aiming High for Disabled Children' [AHDC]. The aim of the initiative is to transform services for disabled children and their families. KCC has been awarded Pathfinder status for short-term breaks element of AHDC initiative, and therefore, the report also outlines the transformation plan for short-term breaks, which has to be delivered by April 2010.

Introduction

1. (1) The Government is investing substantial new money to ensure disabled children and young people have a far better chance of fulfilling their potential. Up to now services for disabled children have too often been uncoordinated and insufficient to enable families with disabled children to enjoy aspects of life other families take for granted.

(2) The Aiming High for Disabled Children initiative has been established to improve the following outcomes for disabled children which are poor in comparison to the general population:

- Educational attainment
- Health
- Transition to adulthood
- Employment
- Family Break up
- Poverty
- Siblings are more likely to experience emotional and behavioural difficulties

(3) The initiative is underpinned by £430m from the DCSF with additional funding from the DOH over three years 2008-09 to 2010-11.

(4) AHDC promises action in three areas to improve outcomes:

- Access and empowerment.

- Responsive services and timely support, and
- Improving quality and capacity.

(5) The government aim is to ensure that everywhere there is a range of holistic support with emphasis on early intervention to enable disabled children and their families achieve their full potential. Additional resources have been earmarked for those services families have said are the most important to help them live ordinary lives: short term breaks, access to child care, transition to adult services, and, from 2009-10, access to equipment and wheelchairs, and more generally strengthening the voice of families and disabled children.

(6) At the centre of the transformation programme is the core offer and local authorities are expected to deliver this by 2010. The principles and minimum standards have been summarised below:

- Information – It is expected that disabled children and their families can access the information they need at every stage of a child's life.
- Transparency – support for disabled children and their parents are determined on a fair, understandable and transparent basis.
- Participation – Disabled children and families are routinely involved in individual care planning and in shaping services.
- Assessment – Services are co-ordinated across agencies and are child centred.
- Feedback – Parents and children to receive feedback on a regular basis when asked their views.

(7) Parents will be surveyed on an annual basis, about whether the core offer is being delivered and this will be a PSA indicator.

Short –Term Breaks Pathfinder Status

2. (1) The transformation of short breaks provision forms a central component of the wider Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC) change initiative. Kent County Council along with some 21 other local authorities has been selected as a pathfinder with the following implications:

- (a) Requirement to provide a two year transformation delivery plan by 30th April 2010.
- (b) To work with the PCTs to meet the Government's Full Service Offer (see attached Appendix A).
- (c) To play an active role in practice development, engagement in learning sets, and networking arrangements to support national short break service developments.
- (d) Although the application was based on the current strategy for services for disabled children it will be necessary to review the current eligibility criteria for

short-break services.

- (e) Prioritise the development of services for children with autism spectrum and/or challenging behaviour as a result of their impairment and children with complex health needs- technology dependent, palliative care, moving and handling.
- (f) Develop a work force strategy to support the development of short break services.

(2) Short term breaks are defined by the DCSF as:

- Residential – overnight, day, outreach.
- Family based overnight.
- Family based day care.
- Sessional/sitting services including support to access community activities.
- Everything else – hospice stays, family holidays, overnight at school.

(3) The funding must be aimed at increasing short term breaks within the community rather than creating a reliance on residential care. It can also be used to provide 'bridging services', such as mentoring/befriending schemes, to enable disabled children to access mainstream services. The funding cannot be given to mainstream services direct.

The DCSF will monitor expenditure which requires CFE and partners to record expenditure separately.

(4) A transformation delivery plan for first two years of the programme i.e. 2008-10 had to be submitted to the DCSF by the end of April 08. The plan was well received by the DCSF and there is an expectation that KCC will be successful.

(5) The DCSF have used the Disability Discrimination Act as a definition of disability '...someone who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day to day activities'.

(6) In addition there is an expectation that local authorities identify and prioritise children who fall into the categories set out below:

- Children with autism spectrum and /or challenging behaviour as a result of their impairment.
- Children with complex health needs including those dependent on technology, those who require palliative care and those who have moving and handling needs.

The short –term break programme has to demonstrate that services are developed to meet the needs of the above groups of disabled children.

(7) There is the requirement that the Plan will be reviewed and updated towards the end of 2008-09.

KCC's Delivery Plan

3. (1) The plan stresses that policy development within Kent is proceeding within a multi-agency context and that commissioning structures are already in place to ensure that both PCT's in Kent and CFE are acting in consort.

(2) The paramount objective is stated as "to improve outcomes for disabled children and their families by offering increased choice in service provision and to develop services when and where they need them".

(3) Developing joint approaches through the Children's Trust and with the independent sector in order to develop competition and choice in the market place is highlighted.

(4) The need to build on and develop joint working relationships with Local Children's Service Partnerships is stressed and in particular the role that they will play in commissioning services from a range of universal providers including from extended schools and children's centre provision.

(5) The overview of the approach to service provision refers to the on-going multi-agency development of area resource centres which operate on a "hub and spoke" model.

Funding Allocations

4. (1) Kent County Council as a Pathfinder Authority is receiving the following ring fenced allocation:

| | 2008-09 | 2009-10 | 2010-11 |
|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Capital | £ 807,200 | £1883,400 | £ Nil |
| Revenue | £1661,900 | £5361,000 | £5361,000 |

(2) The Department of Health and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) have announced that both West Kent PCT and Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT have received additional funding through their baseline allocations to expand short break services. However, this funding is not ring-fenced.

Capital

5. (1) The DCSF has indicated that there is some flexibility in rolling over capital funding although it must all be spent by April 2011 i.e. within the period of the current Comprehensive Spending Review period.

(2) Pathfinders have been advised that the capital plans can include funding for equipment, adaptations to buildings and for the provision of transport.

(3) The funding cannot be used to:

- Fund wider early years initiatives.
- To meet compliance with other disability legislation.
- To replace capital which has already been earmarked from another source.

(4) The Delivery Plan had to be produced within a very limited time period and therefore several of the capital projects are at a formative stage. The projects are small in nature and support the revenue funding such as adaptations to existing buildings to improve manual handling capacity. The funding will also be used to adapt respite foster carers homes who are not entitled to a District Facilities Grant.

(5) During the latter part of 2007/08 KCC and the Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT jointly commissioned a feasibility study to consider the options around developing a multi-agency specialist hub for disabled children and young people living in the Ashford district on Wyvern School's secondary site. The specialist hub will promote a multi-agency approach to delivering co-ordinated assessments, interventions, reviews, training and short breaks. The feasibility study also considered the re-provision of Wyvern's Primary School, Specialist Nursery and SMILE Centre. The conclusion was that there was room for all of the new facilities and costs were identified. A business case has been submitted to the Eastern and Coastal Kent PCT to develop the multi-agency assessment and resource centre component of the specialist hub. PCT Board approval is awaited. This scheme also includes the largest amount of short break capital funding.

Revenue

6. (1) The breakdown of the KCC revenue allocation of £1661.9K for 2008-09 is as follows:

| | |
|--|---------|
| Residential overnight stays | £ 84.0k |
| Family based overnight stays | £433.6k |
| Family based day provision | £221.0k |
| Group based specialist day provision | £366.0k |
| Group based non-specialist day provision | £107.0k |
| Direct payments | £114.0k |
| Management and administration | £158.3k |
| Consultancy | £ 40.0k |
| Promotion and advertising | £ 20.0k |
| Training and workforce development | £ 83.0k |
| Miscellaneous | £ 35.0k |

(2) It should be noted that the intention is for services to be diversified and that the creation of additional residential beds is thus not seen as a priority. However, there are proposals for the current provision to be changed so that there will be a greater take up of beds from children with complex needs - as required by the DCSF.

(3) The funding allocation is considerably larger in years 2 and 3- with most of the 1st year developments being part funded.

(4) It is anticipated that the level of funding for non-specialist provision i.e. the greater use of universal facilities will significantly increase from the 2nd year onwards with Local Children's Service Partnerships playing a key commissioning role.

Service Developments and Associated Strategic Initiatives

7. (1) The areas of service provision for the 1st phase of the plan together with wider policy and strategic initiatives were agreed by SMT.

(2) It will be noted these are categorised within 12 work streams which have been identified to carry the plan forward to its implementation phase. A Programme Board has been established and a Programme manager appointed to oversee the implementation of the delivery plan.

(3) A list of the specific milestones and targets detailed in the delivery plan have been cross-referenced for each development to ensure that all the necessary actions are initiated to implement the plan in full.

Recommendations

8. Members of the Children's Champion Board are asked to:

Note the contents of the report

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Background Documents:

Other Useful Information:

Aiming High for Disabled Children DCSF 2007