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To: Specialist Children's Services Policy Overview and Scrutiny
Committee – 17 November 2011

Subject: **DRAFT KENT EARLY INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION
STRATEGY AND COMMISSIONING FRAMEWORK**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary:	This report summarises the main aspects of the attached draft strategy, including the priority areas for action; outlines our current position with regard to commissioning for early intervention and prevention and sets out the next steps to secure a robust implementation plan and ensure cross agency support
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Background

1. (1) The need to have a clear Early Intervention and Prevention strategy for Kent that identifies priority areas for action based on a clear evidence base and that is supported by a commissioning framework and resourced delivery plan was identified in the Phase 1 Improvement Plan, action 4.3.1.

(2) This draft strategy has been developed in parallel with work on Kent's Early Intervention and Prevention Commissioning Framework and the development of outcome specifications for specific preventative services to address the priority areas for action. All of these work streams have been informed by the same key information, data and analysis provided through a range of agencies and services.

(3) The draft strategy takes account of a range of national and government commissioned research and reports such as the C4EO research into early intervention; "Grasping the Nettle", Graham Allan's report: Early Intervention: The Next Steps and Eileen Munro's review of child protection.

(4) The strategy development has been lead by KCC working with key partners to agree the priority areas for action and ensure synergy with other key strategies and plans that are focused on improving outcomes for Kent's vulnerable children, young people and their families.

The draft strategy

2. (1) The aim of this strategy is to ensure that we are identifying and responding to children and young people's needs at the earliest stage in order to improve outcomes and ensure, wherever possible, that their needs are met within universal services and are not allowed to entrench or escalate thereby requiring specialist intervention.

(2) This is a two and a half year strategy intended to take Kent to 2014. It identifies the priority areas for action as:

- Safeguarding
- High Need Families
- Early Years
- Vulnerable Adolescents
- Emotional Health and Wellbeing, and
- Disabled children, young people and their families

(3) Each priority area sets out the outcomes we want to achieve, the needs and issues relating to the area and the priorities for action. These are summarised in appendix one of the strategy.

(4) This strategy has been informed by key information and data available from a wide range of services and agencies. It is, however, acknowledged that further analysis in some areas is required. Key work which is currently taking place to enable this includes:

- Analysis of Common Assessment Framework referrals, team around the child responses and investigation of outcomes, to provide further information about need; and
- Analysis of Children in Need cases and support arrangements when transferring cases to preventative services

(5) There is also a need to develop and revise existing procedures and practice that cut across all priority areas in the strategy, in particular:

- Quality assurance and performance management
- Workforce planning and development
- Partnership protocols and arrangements
- Communication of the strategy and priority areas for action
- Joint commissioning arrangements; and
- Stakeholder engagement

Early Intervention and Prevention Commissioning Framework

3. (1) The Commissioning Unit is developing a multiple-supplier framework agreement for early intervention and prevention services. A competitive procurement process has taken place and an invitation to express an interest was advertised on the South East Business portal, for organisations to tender to become a potential supplier.

This has resulted in huge interest from the voluntary and community sector, particularly organisations that are Kent based. In October, the Commissioning Unit held two events so that potential providers could meet commissioners to understand the process, the changes in commissioning and share their experience and knowledge of working with vulnerable children and young people in Kent. Over 150 organisations have attended and this has provided invaluable information to inform the process. The Commissioning Unit is currently evaluating all organisations that have tendered. Evaluation criteria include capability, safeguarding, health and safety, financial viability and other quality criteria. Those organisations that meet the required standards will be invited onto the framework and although this is not a guarantee of work will result in them being invited to tender for call off contracts when mini competition invitations to tender are advertised. This first part of the process will reduce the bureaucracy of what they will have to submit and mean that KCC will be able to have shorter timescales for tendering.

(2) The first phase of services to be tendered in line with the Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy will include:

- Integrated Family Support Services
- Adolescent Support Service
- Domestic Abuse Service
- Emotional Wellbeing Service
- Support for Young Carers

Next Steps:

4. (1) The draft strategy will be taken through KCC and partner governance and sign off processes and communicated widely. An implementation plan will support the delivery of the strategy and will be overseen by the Children and Young people's Joint Commissioning Board.

(2) A report on the draft Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy and the Early Intervention and Prevention Commissioning Plan will be taken to Cabinet in late November along with a report on the outcome of the first phase of the evaluation of the organisations that have tendered for the multi-supplier framework.

Recommendations:

5. Members of the Specialist Children's Services Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee are asked to:

- NOTE and COMMENT ON the draft strategy, priority areas for action, progress on the commission framework and next steps.

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Background documents: None