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To: Children Families and Education Policy Overview Committee
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Subject: REPORT TO POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE REGARDING
CONSULTATION

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Summary: The purpose of this report is to inform the Members of the CFE Policy Overview Committee of the consultation undertaken by the Children Families and Education Directorate in 2006/07. It also provides information on consultations planned for 2007/08.

Background and Context

1. (1) A key theme of the Strong and Prosperous Communities White Paper is the need to reshape public services around the citizens and communities who use them – consulting, involving and encouraging them to have a say about the sort of services they want.

(2) Kent County Council has a strong record of public consultation but further development is now required to encompass citizen engagement – identifying new opportunities for people to be involved in and able to influence the services provided.

(3) A central component of the Every Child Matters agenda is an expectation that children's services will develop a culture of participation where it is the norm for children, young people, cares and parents to be involved in decisions that affect them.

(4) Two further drivers for increased participation and consultation include the Children and Young People's Plan and the KCC Towards 2010 targets. Consultation with stakeholders on the Plan indicated they want more engagement and participation by children and young people. A key action within the Plan is to "Seek and act on the views of children and young people and their families to identify needs and inform service planning". The other driver is Towards 2010, target 14 states that we will: "Listen to young people's views and opinions and develop their ideas to improve education and life in Kent".

(5) There are a variety of ways in which children and young people can become involved and give their views across the full range of services including education, social care and health. Examples include the Kent Youth County Council, School Councils and Student Voice, through the Youth Service (which has adopted a "Hear by Right" approach) and meetings with Looked After Children. Kent and Medway Connexions, Surestart and the Kent Children's Fund are also proactive in developing participation.

The Kent Children's Trust has agreed a Participation Framework setting out key principles and standards for participation.

(6) The aim is for participation to be an integral part of commissioning, planning, service provision and performance monitoring. It should be seen as the norm for children and young people to be asked their views and for them to be involved in decisions which affect their lives. The recent consultation on Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services for Kent and Medway is an example of how a broad range of stakeholders had an opportunity to comment on the strategy.

(7) One aspect of participation is consultation and the purpose of this report is to focus on the consultation with the public commissioned or undertaken by the CFE Directorate. The report does not cover the on going participation whereby children and young people are involved individually or collectively in decisions affecting them. Also, the formal consultations related to closures or changes of use of schools or establishments are not included in this report. However, Members should be aware that the Directorate does go beyond the statutory requirements when there is a consultation on future plans for a school or service

(8) A key component of the Directorate's approach to consultation is an extensive survey of the views of children and young people.

The Children and Young People Survey

2. (1) In 2006/ 2007 the Directorate commissioned National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) to conduct a survey of the views of children and young people. Over 40,000 children and young people took part which must make it one of the largest surveys of children and young people commissioned by a local authority.

(2) The survey had two elements, a questionnaire for 7 to 11 year olds and a separate survey for 11 to 19 year olds. 31,527 children completed the primary survey and the secondary survey was completed by 10,344 young people.

(3) The survey provides a wealth of information on the 5 outcomes of Every Child Matters: Being Healthy, Staying Safe, Enjoying and Achieving, Making a Positive Contribution and Economic Well Being. This information will help to inform the planning and development of services and provide valuable feedback against the priorities of the Children and Young People's plan. It also reflects KCC's commitment to listen to the views and opinions of young people as set out in the Towards 2010 targets.

(4) A further benefit of the survey being so extensive is that the information can be used by Kent Children's Trust, by Cluster Boards, Local Trust arrangements and schools. The data can also be analysed by various groupings such as age, gender and children with additional needs.

(5) An Executive Summary Report of the findings provided by NFER is attached in Appendix 1.

(6) Also attached in Appendix 2 is a list of the public consultation that took place in 2006/07.

Plans for the Future

3. (1) Appendix 3 provides information about consultation that is underway or proposed for 2007/08.

(2) A key consultation will be a Parent's Survey. Local Authorities are required to develop a strategic and joined up approach to the design and delivery of parenting support services, ideally through a Parent Support Strategy. It is planned that consultation should take place with parents in Kent during the summer 2007 to inform the development of the strategy.

(3) In addition, in 2007/08, it is intended to: further develop the Participation Framework, to identify any gaps in consultation, and to ensure the views of "hard to reach" groups are obtained. The aim is to continue to make participation and consultation an integral part of Directorate activity.

Conclusion

4. (1) Consultation with the public has helped to:

- Develop strategies – as in the case of the consultation on the Young Carers Strategy.
- Inform the development of services, for example the development of a Resource Centre for disabled children in East Kent.
- Provide feedback on services provided.
- Identify needs and preferences – for example surveys relating to the Early Years Service.
- Obtain feedback from potentially "hard to reach" or "vulnerable groups" such as disabled children and Looked After Children.

(2) When commissioning consultation consideration is given to what the purpose of the consultation is and how the outcomes might be used.

(3) The Children Families and Education Directorate continues to develop a proactive approach to participation and consultation. This is in line with both the Modernising Government agenda and Every Child Matters agenda. It is also a priority for the Children and Young People's plan and a 2010 target.

(4) In 2006/07 there has been broad range of public consultation activity including the extensive children and young people survey. Further consultation is planned for 2007/08.

(5) Participation and consultation is increasingly seen as an integral part of planning, commissioning and performance review activity.

Recommendations

5. The CFE Policy Overview Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

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Background Documents:

None

Children and Young People of Kent: Survey 2006/7

Executive summary (Produced by NFER).

The National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) was commissioned by Kent County Council (KCC) to conduct an independent survey of children and young people in Kent. The council and its partner agencies wanted to find out what children and young people thought about a range of issues related to the five *Every Child Matters* (ECM) outcomes. The purpose of the research was to provide information to support self-evaluation and planning for improvement at county, cluster and school level.

The study involved two specifically-designed questionnaire surveys: one for primary pupils (aged 7-11) and one for secondary and college students, including those participating in work-based learning (aged 11-19). Pupils in special schools and pupil referral units were also included in both surveys.

In total, 31,527 children aged seven to 11 from 382 schools took part in the paper-based primary school survey. It was administered in schools, at a class level, by teachers. A total of 11,305 children and young people aged 11-19 from 98 secondary schools and other educational provision completed the secondary online survey.

The 42,832 children and young people who took part in the survey were generally representative of all children and young people aged 7-19 in Kent according to the following characteristics: gender, looked after children, free school meals, special educational needs, speakers of a first language other than English, and year group. The key findings are presented below under the five ECM outcomes.

Being healthy

Children and young people showed a good awareness of how to be healthy in relation to healthy eating and in relation to the dangers of smoking and drinking alcohol. Their self-reported behaviour, however, suggested that they were not always leading such healthy lifestyles.

- About two-thirds of 7-11s and half the 11-19s reported eating five or more portions of fruit or vegetables on most days. Furthermore, a third of 11-19s reported eating take-away food at least once or twice a week.
- About a quarter of post-16s reported getting drunk at least once or twice a week.
- On the other hand, about three-quarters of 7-11s reported playing sports and half of 11-19s reported exercising for an hour or more on most days.
- Overall, about two-thirds of 11-19s perceived themselves as healthy.

In terms of mental and emotional health, about three-quarters of 7-11s said they usually felt happy and a similar proportion of 11-19s said they enjoyed their life. There were, however, about a quarter of 11-19s who reported feeling sad or depressed at least once or twice a week.

Staying safe

Most children and young people thought that they knew how to stay safe and most reported feeling safe travelling to school or college, in the area they lived, and whilst at school or college. There were, however, a range of factors that concerned children and young people.

- About two-fifths of 7-11s reported that broken glass on the ground and people hanging around made them feel unsafe. The 11-19s reported being concerned about people carrying knives, people on drugs, groups of people hanging around and dark or unlit places.

Bullying was an issue for children and young people from both age groups. A related concern was that there was a small proportion of children and young people who reported that they would not talk to anyone if there was an issue that they could not deal with on their own.

- About half the 7-11s reported that they had been pushed or hit by other children, called names or talked about, or stopped from joining in. About a third of the 7-11s reported that they had been picked on or bullied at school, had their possessions broken or stolen, or been picked on in the area they lived. Similarly, nearly a third of 11-16s reported that they had been bullied in the last year, although, more reassuringly, this proportion halved in the post-16 age group.

In relation to internet safety, while a quarter of 11-19s reported wanting more information about this, over a quarter of 11-16s and over a third of post-16s reported regularly sharing information about themselves on the internet.

Enjoying and achieving

When asked whether they liked going to school, most 7-11s said that they enjoyed it at least sometimes and around half 11-16s and over two-thirds of post-16s said that they enjoyed going to school or college.

The aspect of school that children and young people enjoyed the most was the social side (seeing friends was the most popular response for all age ranges), this was, however, followed by cognitive and skill-based activities and aspects related to the learning process.

- Children (aged 7-11) particularly enjoyed seeing friends, going on trips to visit places, using computers, making things, using the internet, and finding out new things.
- Young people (aged 11-16) also enjoyed seeing their friends and doing sports, drama and music productions.
- The most popular aspects of school or college for post-16s were seeing friends and their lessons.

When asked what helped them to learn, a range of responses were received. However, reading was rated least often (by fewer than half of 11-19s) as something which helped them to learn. Disruptive pupils and not getting feedback on their work was rated by over half of 11-16s and a quarter of post-16s, as a barrier to learning.

Children and young people were asked how well they thought they were doing at school. Most thought that they were doing quite well.

- Two-thirds of 7-11s thought that they were doing well at school but a quarter was not sure.
- Of the 11-16s, three-fifths thought that they were doing 'quite well' and a fifth said 'very well'.
- Over two-thirds of post-16s thought that they were doing 'quite well', compared to a small proportion who said they were doing 'very well'.

Children and young people participated in a range of activities after school and at the weekends. In the main, they spent time at home and with their family and friends.

- Almost all 7-11s said that at least 'sometimes' they spent their time after school doing homework, doing activities with their family, playing with friends and watching television. They most enjoyed playing with friends, playing computer games and playing football. Attending after-school clubs was the least common activity 7-11s engaged in from the list provided.
- Similarly, 11-19s spent their time after school and their weekends at home, 'hanging out' or at a friend's house. During the week they most often spent their time on the internet, watching television and with their family. At weekends, 11-16s spent time with their friends, shopping, on the internet and watching television. About half of post-16s also undertook paid work at the weekends.

Young people were asked whether there were activities that they currently do not undertake but would like to do. About two-fifths of 11-16s and a third of post-16s said they would like to participate in other activities, most saying they would do more sport-related activities. Unfortunately, there were a number of barriers which prevented young people from participating in the activities they would like to do.

- A third of 11-16s and half of post-16s indicated that the cost of activities prevented them doing what they wanted to do. A lack of time, activities not being available locally and a lack of transport were also barriers for between a quarter and half of young people.
- More positively, about a third of 11-16s and a quarter of post-16s said nothing stopped them from doing what they wanted to do.

Making a positive contribution

The findings suggested that children and young people may need to see how their opinions can contribute to change before a greater proportion will consider giving their opinions or making a difference to their school, college, or local area.

- About half the 7-11s felt that they could have a say on what happens at school and in the area they live. About three-quarters of 11-19s felt they could have a say on school or college issues, although less than half felt they could have a say on issues affecting their local area.

- About half the 11-19s reported that they would not be interested in voting in a school or college election or joining a school or college council.
- Furthermore, about half the 11-19s said they did not feel that they could make a difference to the area in which they lived and about three-fifths did not feel they could make a difference to world issues.

Children and young people were asked about the contributions they already made to the area they lived and there were mixed responses.

- About three-quarters of 7-11s said they always put litter in the bin and about two-thirds said they helped with recycling. Similarly, about three-fifths of 11-19s reported that they recycled.
- Only about a quarter of 11-19s reported that they had helped a neighbour or helped someone who was being bullied.
- Overall, about four-fifths of 7-11s, about two-thirds of 11-16s and three-quarters of post-16s reported that they did things to help other people.

Achieving economic well-being

Most 7-11s had good financial awareness, understanding that it was good to save money. Only a very small proportion did not think it was good to save money.

The findings suggested that most children and young people (aged 7-19) had positive aspirations for the future.

- Two-thirds of 7-11s said they knew what job they wanted in the future and about a third were unsure or did not know what they wanted to do.
- Of the 11-16s, young people most commonly indicated that they wanted to get a job, go to school sixth form and go to university in the future. Within the post-16 age group, most often they said they wanted to go to university and get a job.

Some young people perceived no barriers to achieving their future aspirations, with about two-fifths of 11-16s and a third of post-16s indicating that nothing was likely to stop them from doing what they wanted to do. However, for others, there appeared to be a range of barriers.

- A quarter of 11-16s and about a third of post-16s said a lack of money and not having the right qualifications were likely to prevent them from doing what they wanted to do.

Children and young people aged 11-19 were asked whether they felt positive about their future. Around two-thirds indicated that they did feel positive, but a very small proportion reported that they did not feel positive about their future.

- About two-thirds of 11-19s thought that they would be able to get the sort of job they wanted, said they knew what sort of job they wanted and thought that they had talent which would help them get it.

Although many young people (about two-thirds) thought that their school/college was giving them useful skills and knowledge for the future, fewer were positive about the careers advice they received.

Living in Kent

Children and young people were asked for their views on the area they lived. Over three-quarters of 7-11s said they liked their area. The 11-19s were slightly less positive with about two-fifths reporting that their area was a good place to live.

Overall

Overall, the survey findings were relatively positive in relation to the five ECM outcomes. The main issues appeared to be in relation to two of the five outcomes – staying safe and making a positive contribution – where there were particular areas highlighted that required further attention.

Consultation with the public - CFE Directorate.

Consultation 2006/07.

Consultation	Who with	Purpose	Outcome.
Pupil Survey	40,000 children and young people in Kent	To obtain the views of children and young people on key topics and 5 outcomes of ECM	Results currently being received
Early Years Provider Questionnaire	Early Years Child Care Providers.	To determine the level of provision, numbers using services etc.	Consultation completed but final analysis of data not yet available.
Parental Preferences survey re Early Years	3000 parents	To ascertain parental preferences re child care and early years education.	Informs the development of new child care places. Required for Child care sufficiency assessment.
Employer Survey re Early Years provision.	100 employers	To obtain employer preferences on a range of child care issues.	To feed into the statutory child care sufficiency assessment.
Consultation on the Anti-bullying Policy.	Children, parents, schools and other stakeholders.	To seek views and input into the Anti-Bullying policy.	Informed the development of the anti-bullying policy and provided young people's views on bullying.
Consultation on the Young Carers Strategy.	Young carers, parents, voluntary organisations.	To seek views and input into the young carers survey.	Views informed the development of the young carers strategy.
Educational Psychology Service – Satisfaction Survey	Parents of children involved with Educational Psychology Service.	To obtain feedback from parents.	Indicated that 90% of the parents sampled found the involvement to be positive.
Survey of parents/carers and children who have a statutory assessment (conducted by Partnership with Parents)	Parents/Carers and children	To seek views of children and young people about decision-making.	Informed the decision-making.

Survey of parents/carers and children with statements in respect of the secondary transitional process. (Partnership With Parents).	Parents/Carers and children.	Views are collected to inform service improvement to better support children and families and to inform schools.	Inform service improvements. - Most parents happy with preparations for transfer and how child settled. But some suggestions for improvements e.g. simpler paperwork.
Survey of parents /carers using the Partnership With Parents Service including helpline and independent Parental Supporters	Parents and Carers.	To inform further development of service and improve customer satisfaction.	Tested customer satisfaction and informed service change.
Consultation and Participation with Looked After Children – including residential weekends.	Children and Young People Looked After by KCC	To ensure we listen to the views of children and young people in care and use the feedback to inform service planning and delivery.	Documents produced took account of the views of CYP e.g. Kent's response to DfES consultation on Care Matters.
Consultation with children and young people to inform the priorities of Shepway local children's Trust pathfinder plan.	Children and Young People in Shepway.	To ascertain the views of C &YP in order to inform local Children's Trust planning.	Children's views have been taken into account in developing the local children and young people's plan.
Consultation with families regarding the development of a Resource Centre in East Kent.	Families with Disabled Children.	To obtain the views of families on the proposed new resource centre	As a result of the consultation, changes have been made to the plans for the centre.
One-day conference in Thanet for parents of adolescents in need.	Parents of adolescents in contact with children's social services.	Opportunity for parents to express their views but also to identify support arrangements.	Local consortium set up parent group. Parents found the conference useful for learning and gaining support from others.

Kent 14 to 19 Learner Entitlement.	Groups of young people across county.	To obtain feedback on draft Learner Entitlement	Changes to Learner Entitlement documents.
Raising expectations – Staying in Education and Training post- 16	Young People	To obtain feedback on the Government proposals to raise the compulsory participation in education or training post 16.	The views of young people helped to inform the KCC response to the Green Paper.
Consultation on the cross county children and adolescent mental health services strategy.	Range of stakeholders including children, young people and their families.	To inform the development of a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Strategy for Kent.	Consultation completed and informed the CAHMS strategy.

Children Families and Education Planned Consultations 07.08

Details	Start Date	End Date	Group to be consulted	Target area (Kent, Town, district, ward etc	Reason for consultation	Contact Name
Views of Looked After Children	To be set		Looked After Children	Kent	The views of Looked After Children will be sought through residential weekends. This includes obtaining their views on the planned "pledge" for LAC	Paul Brightwell
Use of the Viewpoint package	To be set		Looked After Children	Kent	The use of the Viewpoint package is to be encouraged as a mechanism to assist children and young people in developing and communicating their views	Paul Brightwell, Sarah Skinner.
Consultation based on "Hear By Right" model	To be set		Looked After Children age 16 and over.	Kent	Use of the "Hear By Right" model and appointment of Participation Officer to ensure views of 16+ Looked After Children are obtained.	Mick McCarthy

Details	Start Date	End Date	Group to be consulted	Target area (Kent, Town, district, ward etc	Reason for consultation	Contact Name
Consultation from complaints and compliments	Ongoing		Service users and carers.	Kent	It is intended to use the "informal feedback" received through complaints and compliments to inform service delivery.	Anthony Mort, Ann Kitto
Consult parents and carers about the reasons for referral to the SEN and Disability Tribunal.	March 2007	Dec. 2007	Parents and carers	Kent	Inform improvements to practice for the Local Authority and Partnership With Parents in order to try to resolve issues for parents.	Colin Feltham
Survey of children with statements in respect of the secondary transfer process	March 2007	March 2008	Children and young people with statements	Kent	Improve the process of secondary transfer for children and young people with special needs	Colin Feltham
Pilot survey of children who have had a statutory assessment.	Sept. 2007	July 2008	Children and young people who have had a statutory assessment.	Kent	Improve the process of statutory assessments from the perspective of children and young people.	Colin Feltham

Details	Start Date	End Date	Group to be consulted	Target area (Kent, Town, district, ward etc	Reason for consultation	Contact Name
Pupil voice survey for disabled children.	March 2007	March 2008	Disabled children and children with a disability.	To be confirmed	To learn from the experience of disabled children to produce information for others who are about to transfer.	Colin Feltham
User satisfaction survey for people using the Partnership with Parents service.	March 2007	Sept. 2007	Parents and carers.	Kent	To seek the perception of parents and carers – to inform service development.	Linda Baker. Partnership with parents.
User satisfaction of preventative/early intervention services provided through local joint planning and commissioning structures – local Children’s Trust partnerships	Sept 2007	March 2008	School clusters, C&YP, parents/carers,	Kent	Survey/questionnaire approaches to evaluate effectiveness of commissioned services from user view point.	Maggie Stephenson
Consultation on the way forward for the Local Authority in achieving better outcomes for gypsy, Roma and Traveller Young People	April 2007	By September 2007	Children and Young People Partner agencies Schools, FE colleges MCAS staff, other Local Authority officers	Kent	DFES “Positive Pathways” position statement	Glynis Eley

Details	Start Date	End Date	Group to be consulted	Target area (Kent, Town, district, ward etc	Reason for consultation	Contact Name
Parental Satisfaction Survey regarding school psychology service.	August 2007	August 2007	Parent sample whose children have received a service	Kent	To ascertain satisfaction levels and to review/modify practice in response.	Andrew Heather
Consultation on KCC's draft strategy for early years education and childcare	Sept 07	Dec 07	Schools and Children's Centres; early years providers; Health Services and Children's Social Services; and, equality stakeholder groups.	Kent	To ensure that all stakeholders have the opportunity to inform the development of KCC's strategy for early years education and childcare.	Lynne Miller
Anti bullying survey	Nov 07	Nov 07	All Kent schools (Year 4 upwards) & other relevant groups	Kent	Pupils invited to submit their responses to help inform future KCC policy and to highlight key issues around the bullying of children and young people.	Sarah Lewis
Instrument Music Survey	Sept 07	Oct 07	Pupils in Kent schools	Kent	To obtain views from pupils on what instrumental provision they want to shape the framework for instrumental music provision.	Lynne Miller

Details	Start Date	End Date	Group to be consulted	Target area (Kent, Town, district, ward etc	Reason for consultation	Contact Name
Secondary Strategy	Nov 07	March 08	Headteachers, Governors, Parents, Pupils	Kent	To inform the development of the Secondary Strategy Phase 3	Marilyn Hodges
Parent Support Strategy	June 07	Sept. 2007	Parents and Stakeholders	Kent	To inform the development of the Parent Support Strategy	Diane Trollope
Parents consultation project – re Early Years Services.	June 2007	March 2008	Parents	Selected wards Kent wide	To continue the work commenced between Nov 2005 and March 2006, to create a larger sample and to comply with the statutory requirements of the Childcare Act 2006	Tony Alderton
Annual Provider Survey	Oct 2007	April 2008	Providers of childcare and early education	Kent	To determine levels of provision, numbers of children using services, equal opportunities issues and to compile a recruitment and training needs analysis	Tony Alderton
Provider sustainability project	Aug 2007	March 2008	Providers of childcare and early education	Kent	To establish the mechanisms and factors that determine the sustainability of providers	Tony Alderton

Details	Start Date	End Date	Group to be consulted	Target area (Kent, Town, district, ward etc	Reason for consultation	Contact Name
Family Group Conference Feedback.	On – going	August 2008	Participants in Family Group Conferencing.	Kent	Use of feedback forms to check practice meets needs. Also to support good practice and inform the quality management cycle.	Bob Rose.
Transition of Connexions funding to the Local Authority	July 2007	Oct 2007	Young people, parents, schools, staff, Members etc	Kent	Changes to funding of Connexions	Helen Jones.
Consultation on proposals for specialist provision in mainstream schools for children with SEN	June 2007	July 2007	Children and young people, parents, health staff, Members.	Ashford, Shepway, Dartford, Gravesham, Swanley.	To seek views of stakeholders on proposals.	Nuala Ryder
Consultation on proposals for specialist provision in mainstream schools for children with SEN	Nov. 2007	Dec 2007	Children and young people, parents, health staff, Members.	Swale, Thanet, Canterbury, Dover/Deal, Maidstone, Tonbridge, Sevenoaks Cranbrook	To seek views of stakeholders on proposals.	Nuala Ryder