

Report Title: **Co-Ordination of services for 16-19 year olds**

Report authorised by:

Cllr Gideon Bull, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Wards(s) affected: **N/A**

Report for: **[Key / Non-Key Decision]**

1. Purpose of the report (That is, the decision required)

1.1 In June 2008 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee asked for a report on the possibility of undertaking an in-depth review on the co-ordination of services for 16-19 year olds.

1.2 The aim of this report is to suggest areas where the Overview and Scrutiny Committee might usefully commission an in-depth review.

2. Introduction by Cabinet Member (if necessary)

2.1 N/A

3. State link(s) with Council Plan Priorities and actions and /or other Strategies:

Any reviews into the co-ordination of services to this age group would help the Council to meet three of its priorities, namely:

- Encouraging lifetime well-being at home, work, play and learning
- Promoting independent living whilst supporting adults and children when needed
- Delivering excellent, customer focussed, cost effective services.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider whether they wish to commission a review into any of the areas referred to in the report.
- 4.2 That the Committee agree that if a review is undertaken they agree in principle to the co-options and that the review be undertaken in accordance with the principals set out in Paragraph 13.

5. Reason for recommendation(s)

It would not be practical to carry out a detailed review into the co-ordination of all the services provided to young people between 16 and 19 years old. It is therefore, suggested that if a scrutiny review is commissioned it looks at particular aspects of this service.

6. Summary

This reports sets out possible options for in-depth scrutiny reviews.

7. General

- 7.1 As part of its work programme the Overview and Scrutiny Committee asked for a report on whether the co-ordination of services for 16 – 19 year olds should be subject to a full scale scrutiny review.
- 7.2 If the Committee is to undertake a review in this area, it might be better to extend the age group to 14 – 19 as this is the classification used by the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) in its Children’s Plan and other policy documents. However the DCSF also use the 16-19 terminology and ask the Council to plan around that cohort specifically. So both the 14-19 and 16-19 cohorts are perfectly legitimate.

8. The Importance of the 14- 19 Age Group

- 8.1 The Department for Children, Schools and Families state in their one year progress report on the Children’s Plan that:

“The years from 14 to 19 are characterised by the transition from childhood to young adult life. This brings with it significant physical, emotional and social change, alongside the move from compulsory schooling to further or higher education, or to employment. It is a period during which young people develop a sense of, and need for, independence, and take increasing responsibility for themselves and their future, although parents remain the most important influence on the choices they make. It is also a period when young people increasingly face choices involving risk, including risks related to alcohol or substance misuse or sexual behaviour”.

8.2 Providing good services to this age Group is also an essential element of the Council’s vision of wanting every child and young person in Haringey to be happy, healthy and safe with a bright future. This is reflected in the priorities set out in the Haringey children and young people’s plan and in particular the ones set out in Appendix A.

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8.3 This committee has also been long aware of the significance of this age group and have carried out a number of reviews on issues which concerned it, such as teenage pregnancy. Indeed this year it commissioned a review on the early identification and assessment of young people at risk of substance abuse.

9. The Services Provided to this Age Group

9.1 The services provided for this age group are both numerous and diverse, including education, career advice, work related training, youth facilities, counselling, help, advice and assistance. It also involves many agencies i.e. the Council, Connexions, FE Colleges, Job Centre Plus, and Housing Associations. There are some interesting points to explore around Health provision for this age group. It is, apart from anything else, one of those areas where the transition from ‘children’ to ‘adult’ services occurs at a different ages according to the service provided. It is also an area where there are likely to be substantial changes for instance the Education and Skills Act:- -

- Introduces a new duty on young people to participate in education or training beyond 16 and creates a statutory framework to support and enforce it with new duties on local education authorities, education providers and employers.
- Places a duty on Local Authorities to arrange for the assessment of the education and training needs of a person with a statement of educational needs during their last year at school.
- Requires secondary schools to present careers advice in an impartial way and which is in the best interest of the child.
- Gives an explicit duty on the Learning and Skills Council to provide proper facilities for apprenticeships for 16 to 18 year olds and to make reasonable provision for apprenticeships for 19 years and over.
- Requires Local Education Authorities to co-operate with partners who are

responsible for 14 to 19 education and training.

The Children and Young Person's Act is as far reaching in its provision relating to looked after children.

10. Areas which could be covered by a Review

10,1 To write a report covering the co-ordination of all services provided to 14 to 19 year olds would be a complex and lengthy undertaking. It would not be practical to subject the whole area to detailed scrutiny review. If scrutiny is to undertake a review which is likely to make a difference and help the council to improve already excellent services, a more helpful approach might be to look at the overall strategy for this age group or at the issues which might arise in the way a particular service is delivered, For instance what happens when responsibility for providing a service to a particular group of people passes from one agency to another. Any topic chosen should tie in with the Council priorities listed in Paragraph 3 above.

11. Strategic Issues which might be subjected to a Review

11.1 The statutory guidance on Children's Trusts state that local collaboration is essential to deliver 14-19 reform priorities and that a 14-19 partnership is central to facilitating this. This partnership is, "the strategic body in the local area that agrees and reviews the local vision for 14-19 and develops and articulates local strategies and plans to deliver the full range of 14-19 priorities. Each 14-19 partnership will produce a 14-19 plan which will be an integral element of the Children and Young People's Plan.

11.2 This work is at an early stage and is going to involve a number of agencies. Although, in theory, scrutiny might add value to this process it is probably better when the partnership has been set up and the 14-19 plan prepared for scrutiny to receive a report on what has been agreed.

11.3 The same considerations would arise insofar as a scrutiny exercise into plans for 16-19 education are concerned. Scrutiny could do some work looking at 'transitions' into adulthood and what that means in the eyes and organisation of different services. The arrangements for the Council taking responsibility for this age group and extending the leaving age to 18 are being developed by the Council and its partners. This area could also be scrutinised in more detail once the Council has taken responsibility for this.

12. Issues which arise in the way a particular service is delivered

12.1 Following consultation with the relevant services we have identified the following activities which might benefit from scrutiny review:

- The provision of housing for young people who have been looked after by the Council. This review would be mainly concerned with the way the different agencies worked together, at whether there had been any difficulties in finding accommodation and if so why and whether anything could be done to prevent any similar problems in the future.
- How the Council and its partners plan for young people who do not meet adult eligibility criteria but are still vulnerable, eg. Young people with a mild learning disability who are leaving care. This would involve discussing with the agencies the way they work together to plan for this group of people, problem areas and possible improvements
- The effectiveness of services aimed at meeting the needs of young people who are considered “vulnerable” or “hard to reach”. This would look at the action taken to identify such young people, the services provided to them and whether there were any shortfall or gaps in provision and how these might be addressed.
- Transition planning from 14 + years for all young people with statements of special educational needs including those with disabilities. Again this would be concerned with looking at how the agencies work together to provide cost-effective services.
- The development of individualised budgets to enable the young person to manage their own packages of support. This would be looking at what happens at present and proposed improvements.
- The way in which the future social care and health needs of young people with complex and long term high support needs are assessed and met. This again would involve discussing the present arrangements with agencies, whether there are any problems and if so how they might be addressed.
- Looking at the arrangements for ensuring parent/carers and young people are aware of the opportunities and services available post 16 years and beyond. This would be looking at what happens at present and proposed improvements
- The arrangements made when responsibility for providing services to young people with learning difficulties and disabilities passes from Children and Family Services to Adult Social Services. This would look at how the agencies work together to ensure that there is a smooth handover and that the changes cause as little stress to the customer as possible.

12.2 Officers from the Children and Young Peoples Service and from Adult Cultural and Community Services involved will be present at the meeting to answer any specific questions members may have and to advice on the appropriateness of each review.

12.3 It is suggested that Members agree to look at one activity and then when that is completed they can, if they wish, chose another activity to scrutinise.

13. The Scrutiny Process

13.1 Whatever review is undertaken it is suggested:

- That at least 4 members are appointed to the review panel to emphasise the importance the Council attach to this area.
- That depending on the area of work covered, at least one representative of the other agencies and a young person who has made use of the service being scrutinised be co-opted on to the review panel. The Committee are asked to agree in principle to this proposal so that action can be taken to co-opt the necessary people.
- All relevant agencies should be involved in the review. Depending on what is scrutinised this could include Connexions, the Health Authority, Homes for Haringey, Adult Social Services, The Children's Trust, voluntary organisations other statutory agencies such as Job Centre Plus or the Learning and Skills Council.
- Any review should ideally take no more than two meetings. The first would discuss any problems and the second, if one is necessary, will discuss solutions. If a longer review is required the possible benefits should first be clarified as the agencies involved would have to allocate scarce resources to it.
- Any review should be looking at what the different agencies do, how they liaise with each other, if there are any difficulties and whether there are any gaps or duplications in services.
- An important element of the review will be looking at the Council's priorities for the area scrutinised
- Any public service agreements performance indicators which relate to the issue being scrutinised will be reported to the Panel.
- The review panel should be looking to make recommendations for improving services which either result in savings or service improvements at no additional cost. In the rare instances where proposals are likely to result in additional expenditure the review must identify how this could be met.

14. Chief Financial Officer Comments

14.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the proposal within this report. However, any future review of services which results in a change in service provision may require additional resources. Any such recommendation will need either to be funded from within existing resources or be considered as part of the normal budget setting process.

15. Head of Legal Services Comments

15.1. The Head of Legal Services has been consulted on the content of this report and has no specific comment to make.

16. Consultation

16.1 This report has been written in consultation with the relevant services.

17. Service Financial Comments

17.1 Apart from the cost of writing this short report which can be met from existing resources there are at present no financial implications for the Overview and Scrutiny. The cost of any detailed review will also be met from existing budgets.

18. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Relevant reports and decisions of this Committee. Anyone wishing to inspect these should phone Carolyn Banks