

North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet Date: 14 October 2013

ITEM 6(e)

Title: Early Intervention
and Prevention Strategy

Portfolio(s): Children, Young People and Learning

Cabinet Member(s): Councillor Ian Grayson

Report from Directorate: Children, Young People and Learning

Report Author: Paul Cook Head of Preventative & Safeguarding (Tel: 643 7381)

All

Wards affected:

PART 1

1.1 Purpose:

To seek Cabinet's authorisation for the actions required to take forward the North Tyneside Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy and delivery plan.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet authorise the Head of Preventative and Safeguarding Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Learning to put in place and take forward the North Tyneside Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy and delivery plan.

1.3 Forward plan:

This report is listed in the Forward Plan for the Cabinet meeting on the 14 October 2013.

1.4 Council plan and policy framework

The North Tyneside Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy links to the Council Plan (Our North Tyneside) as follows:

- Our People will be supported to achieve their full potential, especially our children and young people
- and
- Our People will be cared for and kept safe if they become vulnerable.

1.5 Information:

Context

Over the past five years demand for specialist, 'late intervention' children's services, has grown dramatically both regionally and nationally. The North East region has the highest numbers of Looked After Children and children subject to a Child Protection Plan across the country. North Tyneside has also experienced significant demand led pressures on such services. The number of looked after children in North Tyneside has increased by 29% since 2008 and Child Protection cases have increased by 19% over the same period. Welfare reform and low economic growth are expected to intensify and prolong demand for high level services. The long term pressures on budgets mean this level of demand is unsustainable in the longer term.

A series of Government commissioned reviews, including the Marmot, Allen and Munro reviews, have established a clear evidence base that prevention and early intervention offers the most effective and efficient way of improving the lives of vulnerable children.

North Tyneside Children, Young People and Learning Partnership held a multi agency seminar in October 2013 to provide final approval for North Tyneside's Prevention and Early Intervention approach.

North Tyneside's Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy

North Tyneside Children Young People and Learning Partnership agreed to look at how children's services could best address the underlying causes of deprivation and vulnerability within families. Their aim was to improve the life chances of the most vulnerable children and to manage the demand for high level support services. In November 2012 a Children, Young People and Learning Partnership Strategic Forum brought partners together to consider how children's services could best support vulnerable families in the future. The group agreed that the borough's children's services needed to be refocused on prevention and early intervention.

The Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy sets out the partnership's vision for a more sustainable balance between preventative/early intervention services and remedial provision. The implementation of the plan will establish an infrastructure that ensures vulnerable families receive timely and effective support.

The strategy sets out 5 key themes:

1. Vulnerable families are identified and supported at the earliest opportunity

A streamlined and family focussed assessment framework, known as the Early Help Assessment, will be introduced. It will be used to assess the needs of vulnerable families and inform subsequent support packages. A new 'Font Door' Service will provide a dedicated customer service call handling function for all children's services enquiries and referrals. Notifications involving vulnerable children and young people will immediately be referred to a Multi Agency Screening and Coordination Team. Where safeguarding concerns are raised, the Social Work Assessment Team will undertake an assessment and identify the appropriate level of support. The Multi Agency Screening and Coordination Team will then ensure families receive the timely support they need from appropriate agencies.

2. Sustainable improvements in vulnerable children's outcomes are achieved by addressing the needs of the family as a whole.

Integrated services will ensure vulnerable families are provided with a comprehensive service which addresses all their needs. The Family Nurse Partnership and Health Visitors will support vulnerable mothers from early in their pregnancy and throughout the early years of a child's life. An Early Help and Coordination Team will provide additional assistance to families experiencing low level or more straightforward issues. Families with more complex issues will be supported by the Family Partner Team. Family Partners will work with individual families, to understand their circumstances, deliver practical hands on support and coordinate integrated support packages. Where families are not meeting their commitments, the Family Partner will provide assertive challenge, with recourse to a sliding scale of sanctions where appropriate.

3. Services to tackle the underlying causes of poor outcomes for children and young people are developed

Children's Centres will work with vulnerable families from the early stages of pregnancy to promote key parenting behaviours. These include breast feeding, secure attachment and positive relationships, responsive parenting and smoking / alcohol cessation during pregnancy. Partners will also develop a framework for the delivery of Health Visiting, which will become the responsibility of the LA in 2015. Innovative approaches to delivering services such as oral health education and nutrition advice will be developed. North Tyneside's parenting support offer will also be reviewed to deliver robust focus on early intervention, particularly during the first three years of a child's life.

4. Every child enters school ready to succeed

The Language For All programme will continue to support children's early language development. Free nursery places for the most disadvantaged 2 year olds will be extended. The remit of the Virtual Head Teacher has been extended to incorporate all priority groups and a Vulnerable Learners Team will provide targeted support to vulnerable learners. Children with disabilities and additional needs will be supported by an Integrated Disability and Additional Needs Service, which will bring together key partners to deliver integrated support, including the appropriate educational assistance.

5. Children and young people develop outside of school

Young people will be able to access positive activities beyond the school day in every locality and a capital investment programme will transform the borough's youth facilities. The Youth Support Service will now focus on providing targeted support to the most vulnerable young people. Work with the voluntary and community sector will help to deliver universal provision across the borough. The multi agency Youth Provision Board will lead on preventative support to young people.

Next Steps

A Prevention and Early Intervention quality assurance framework will be developed, to ensure services are of a consistently high standard.

Governance

The Children, Young People and Learning Partnership has overall responsibility for the Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy. An annual progress report will be presented to the Children, Young People and Learning Partnership's Commissioning Executive Board, with exception reports provided as appropriate. North Tyneside's Health and Wellbeing Board and the Children's Health and Wellbeing Board will provide oversight, ongoing challenge and scrutiny to the strategy and delivery plan. Both boards will receive quarterly progress reports and an annual performance report.

1.6 Decision options:

1. To agree the actions proposed to implement the North Tyneside Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy.
2. To decline to accept the North Tyneside Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy and require officers to submit detail of an alternative proposal.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

Cabinet is recommended to agree the North Tyneside Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy. Early help and support to vulnerable families, as is increasingly becoming evident, is the most effective way to give the best start to children. The importance of helping families to prevent problems becoming a crisis that threatens the stability of the family and therefore the position of the children and young people in the household cannot be overestimated. It is also clear that interventions made at the earliest opportunity provide the best value for money. They have a significant pay back in terms of funding investment, as they often avoid the need for expensive reactive support via looked after children and protection services and or enforcement provision through the courts.

1.8 Appendices:

The North Tyneside Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy.

1.9 Contact officers:

Paul Cook: Head of Preventative and Safeguarding Services – tel: 643 7381

Jill Baker: Senior Manager Early Help and Support – tel: 643 6462

Anthony Gollings: Financial Business Manager – tel: 643 8071

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information and reports have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- The Munro report
http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/pls/portal/NTC_PSCM.PSCM_Web.download?p_ID=547829
- The Allen Report
http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/pls/portal/NTC_PSCM.PSCM_Web.download?p_ID=547821
- The Marmot Review
http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/pls/portal/NTC_PSCM.PSCM_Web.download?p_ID=547827
- Health Visitor Implementation Plan
http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/pls/portal/NTC_PSCM.PSCM_Web.download?p_ID=547826
- More Great Childcare
http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/pls/portal/NTC_PSCM.PSCM_Web.download?p_ID=547828
- Health and Social Care Act
http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/pls/portal/NTC_PSCM.PSCM_Web.download?p_ID=547825
- Children and Young people's Plan 2010-14
http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/pls/portal/NTC_PSCM.PSCM_Web.download?p_ID=547823
- Children and Young people's plan 2012
http://www.northtyneside.gov.uk/pls/portal/NTC_PSCM.PSCM_Web.download?p_ID=547824

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

The North Tyneside Early Intervention and Prevention services are aligned to available funding. No additional funding is required to deliver the resultant action plan. The implementation of the prevention and early intervention framework is essential for managing demand led pressures on our high level services, with the potential for significant savings. Aligning children services and public health resources will also help to realise significant efficiencies.

2.2 Legal

Early Intervention and Prevention Services are delivered as part of the Council's duty under the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004 and related guidance to provide such services as required to support and help vulnerable families.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

Providers and users of early help and support services, together with staff have been consulted on the development of the North Tyneside Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy. Feedback from Ofsted in the inspection of Children Centres and early help provision has also been used.

2.4 Human rights

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and Article 18 in particular supports the provision of state provided assistance to help parents and carers bring up their children.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

The North Tyneside Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy notes that help and support will be available to all vulnerable families irrespective of their personal circumstances and will ensure openness of access to assistance.

2.6 Risk management

There are no specific risks directly arising from this report.

2.7 Crime and disorder

Early Intervention and Prevention services are noted as a positive intervention to prevent what can be for some families a downward spiral into crime and disorder.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no specific issues of environment and sustainability arising from this report.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Strategic Director(s)
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s)
- Chief Executive
- Chief Finance Officer
- Monitoring Officer
- Strategic Manager Policy, Partnerships, Performance and Communication

Report author:



Paul Cook, Head of Preventative and Safeguarding