

(excerpt from the notes of the Placements for LAC Task Group meeting held on 4 November 2010)

### **Family & Parenting Support Commissioning Strategy**

1. Members considered the Family & Parenting Support Commissioning Strategy, due for approval by Cabinet on 16 December 2010. The Chairman reminded members that the content of this item should remain confidential until the Strategy was publically available.

2. Julia Cramp, Service Director for Commissioning & Performance, introduced the Strategy and summarised the approach it proposes for services across the four defined levels of need:

3. **Universal Family and Parenting Support Services**

Available to all families and parents; expected to deal with their everyday concerns and worries.

The budget for these services would reduce in the next financial year and therefore the Council would work with ASK, a Wiltshire charity providing services for supporting families and parents, in order to provide them for less money.

4. **Lower Level (2) – Targeted Family and Parenting Support Services**

For all parents who have 1 or 2 problems that can be addressed by focused, short-term support.

There were significant resources invested in lower level 2 services through the Children's Centres, although in future these would be used more flexibly with more emphasis on family outreach and using parents as peer mentors. It was therefore proposed to de-commission a number of voluntary sector services currently providing services at this level, with contracts ending on 31 March 2010. Some of the savings would be used as part of budget savings and the rest would be shifted to a higher level 2 services.

Funding for the Centres may not be ring-fenced next year but it was thought very unlikely that the Council would decrease their funding.

5. **Higher Level (3) – Targeted Family and Parenting Support Services**

For families and parents who complex and multiple needs requiring long-term support.

It was considered that there was a potential for overlap, duplication and lack of co-ordination and inequity of access across Wiltshire for this level of service. A number of existing contracts for these services would therefore finish on 31 September 2010 and the service would go out to tender. The new single provider would commence on 1 October 2011.

6. **Specialist Family and Parenting Support Services**

For parents who need support so that they can adequately safeguard their child/children and their child/children can remain at home.

Discussions were taking place on the future of services funded from the Think Family Grant, which had been successful in Westminster and the Coalition Government was keen on promoting and developing.

7. It was confirmed that the Extended Services grant, which funds schools' Parent Support Advisors (PSAs), was coming to an end. It would therefore be up to schools to decide whether to fund the PSAs themselves, with money possibly being available through new funding streams such as the Pupil Premium.
8. The Service Director for Commissioning & Performance reported that although some contracts with voluntary agencies would cease, some funding would still be available to them through other avenues. Following member concern, the Director confirmed that these groups had not been told they could obtain funding through Area Boards, which were not allowed to fund services that are otherwise or have previously been provided by the local authority.

## **Resolution**

**To convey the following to Cabinet prior to its consideration of the Commissioning Strategy on Tuesday 16th November:**

**"The Placements for Looked After Children (LAC) Task Group endorses the Family & Parenting Support Commissioning Strategy in terms of providing a stable framework for future commissioning and defining the Council's key priorities in this area. However, the Task Group does have concerns regarding the sources and levels of future funding for Family & Parenting Support and will be seeking reassurances that the changes proposed to how these services are delivered represent the most effective use of the funds available and lead to improved outcomes for families in Wiltshire."**