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Brighton and Hove Children's Fund
Delivery Plan 2005-8

1. Vision

1.1 Vision

Brighton and Hove wants the best outcomes for all children and young people in the city. Brighton and Hove Children's Fund is creating better outcomes for 5-13 year olds at risk of social exclusion, some of the most vulnerable children. Brighton and Hove City Council has set a target of thriving 14 year olds. To ensure that we reach that target it is essential that vulnerable 5-13 year olds have the support they need, this is what Brighton and Hove Children's Fund seeks to provide.

Brighton and Hove Children's Fund want to see high quality, integrated, multi-agency preventative services working in partnership with families and children to provide the support they need.

Brighton and Hove is a pathfinder Children's Trust. The Children's Trust Partnership aims to integrate all children's education, social care and health services in order to improve outcomes for children. This requires a commitment to doing things differently, an innovatory approach and a willingness to learn from what works. Brighton and Hove Children's Fund has much to offer to this process.

1.2 Strategy

The Children's Trust Partnership Strategy sets out the vision and values of the Children's Trust Partnership, which provides the overarching framework for all children's services, including Brighton and Hove Children's Fund.

Children's Fund Partnership Board members have helped to shape this document along with other stakeholders.

The underpinning Children's Fund principles of partnership, prevention and participation are evident in the values and policy framework set out in the Strategy below:

Values

The Children's Trust Partnership will:

- respect the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child
- work in partnership to create a more inclusive future for children and young people where everyone feels valued and is able to enjoy a good quality of life
- provide high quality services which meet the diverse needs of children and young people and their families and are equally accessible to all
- support and strengthen the family and caring relationships that children and young people need throughout the journey of growing up, building upon the social capital that holds a community together.
- maintain effective clinical and service governance through patient and public involvement, clinical audit, risk management, clinical effectiveness, staffing and staff management, education and training, and use of information.
- listen to and involve children, young people and families, ensuring they are empowered to participate in the planning, development and delivery of services.
- develop value and respect a skilled, flexible, and sustainable workforce that is representative of the communities we serve, is clear about what they are supposed to do, and is encouraged to be creative, innovative, and to work effectively in teams. recognise the breadth of knowledge and ideas within the Community and Voluntary Sector and to value and utilise these resources when developing policy, strategy, and service delivery.

A New Policy Framework

To achieve its' vision, and to respond to needs identified in the City profile the Children's Trust Partnership has agreed 5 principles that will underpin the redesign and restructuring of services:

- Children and young people at the heart of the system
- Integrated social care, health, and education services that are seamless, responsive, and delivered locally.
- Tackling poverty, investing in prevention, and supporting parents.
- A single set of shared priorities
- Allocating resources to meet priorities on the evidence of need and good practice

1.3 Cultural Change

Children's Fund services are built around the needs of the child or young person. Children's Fund services have the full involvement of the child or young person in both identifying these needs and the solutions to them.

The culture and practice of the Children's Fund has influenced the Children's Trust Partnership in the following ways:

- Children and young people are at the heart of the process and services will be designed around the child's needs and the child's journey.

- The participation of parents and children in decision making has been built into the governance structure of the Children's Trust Partnership through the development of a Youth Council and a Parents Forum.
- Prevention, parenting and tackling poverty have been identified as the three priorities of the Children's Trust Partnership
- An extended schools ethos has been developed within a number of schools within a range of communities in need in the City. This includes greater engagement of schools with their communities, greater skills in working with parents, new approaches to promoting inclusion, schools as effective gateways to services and wider participation of children and young people.

1.4 Children's Fund Practitioners Influence Strategic Development

Learning Labs

Learning labs are an exciting new development in the city. They are a method by which front line staff can influence strategic policy, by sharing their learning from practice.

One of the first Learning Labs in the City is a group of Children's Fund practitioners from a range of agencies, including schools, who have been working together in Hangleton and Knoll. The Children's Fund practitioners have been developing new ways of working to support young people in the transition to secondary school. They will now be sharing their learning directly with the Chief Officers of Children's services.

1.5 Services sustained

- Family Group Conferences at the heart of the system, empowering families and children to contribute to decision making and diverting children and young people from public care, maintaining them within their own families and communities.
- Primary school counselling available in schools in communities of need, and to children in need in other areas.
- Holistic extended school services linked to locally based area support teams and children's centres, providing preventative services and signposting.
- Children and young people in communities participating in defining their own needs and solutions, in partnership with parents, community members and local services.
- Community based approaches to tackling need including crime and anti social behaviour that bring together community members, parents, young people and agencies.

1.6 Good Practice Embedded in Local Structures

By 2006, Brighton and Hove Children's Fund expect the following structural changes:

- Children, young people and parents will have a direct influence on policy development and decision making through the Governance structure of the Children's Trust as well as the service review and redesign process.
- Principles of consultation and public involvement will be incorporated at all stages of the Children's Trust process including the formative stage.
- Clusters of schools working together in neighbourhoods using an extended school, holistic approach, commissioning some preventative services. School clusters will work closely with multi disciplinary teams and children's centres which will provide a range of preventative and family support services.
- Development of the SENCO role within schools to facilitate interagency liaison and integrated working between schools and other agencies.
- Empowering family and child centred decision making embedded in practice, and use of family group conferences clearly identified in procedures.
- Good practice in involving children in decision making and defining their own outcomes informs both commissioning and capacity building in communities.

2. Planning for Lasting Change

2.1 Review of delivery and service priorities

Brighton and Hove Children's Fund is located clearly within the developing Children's Trust Partnership. The coherence between the priorities of the Children's Fund and the Children's Trust Partnership has been described. The review, redesign and procurement model within the Children's Trust Partnership is the mechanism for the holistic redesign of all children's services, therefore it will be the mechanism for mainstreaming of Children's Fund projects and initiatives.

Services will be redesigned according to need and evidence of service effectiveness and good practice and parents and children will be involved at every step of this process. There will be changes to all children's services including Children's Fund services in the future. The service review and redesign process offers an opportunity to review the models of practice developed through the Children's Fund and how the most effective of these can be mainstreamed by being incorporated into levels of service delivered according to need across the city.

2.2 Current Services, Outcomes and Influence

2.3 Family Group Conferences (FGCs)

The Daybreak Family Group Conference project is demonstrating an exciting innovative approach to Family Group Conferences. The project has a community focus and accepts referrals from a range of agencies and direct from families themselves. The project is also leading the way nationally in promoting the involvement of children and young people through independent advocacy. Family Group Conferences are an evidence based approach supported by international research as contributing to better outcomes for children and young people by delivering more stable planning, empowering family and child centred decision making and higher numbers of placements within their own families and communities.

Outcomes Resulting From Family Group Conferences (FGCs)

33 Children and young people were the subjects of FGCs in 2003-4.

The Family Group Conference Project is exceeding it's targets with 94% of children subject to FGC's remaining within their families and communities (target 70%) and in 4 families children moved from being looked after by the local authority in foster or residential placements, to returning to the care of extended family members.

Family Group Conferences put families at the heart of decision making with families making plans for their children in private family time. The Daybreak project demonstrates that even in acute crisis, extended families can plan effectively and safely for their children.

The project fits within core Children's Trust Partnership aims and objectives and has demonstrated the outcomes to secure core funding. Decisions about future mainstream funding and commissioning of Family Group Conferences will be informed by the 'Strengthening Families' review in 2005, which will clarify the role of FGCs within the range of services offered to children and families requiring intensive support. A two year contract from 2005-7 is planned to support the project during this interim period.

2.4 Children Can Do

Children Can Do provides a model of good practice in involving children and young people in decision making that can inform practice within the Children's Trust Partnership and the development of Local Area Agreements. Children Can Do also provides a model whereby children and young people in socially excluded communities are identifying their own needs and solutions. The Scarman Trust nationally have been working with SEEDA and GOSE to develop Community Service Agreements as an effective way of harnessing the resources and strengths of communities and public services to work together. Over the next year, Brighton and Hove Children's Fund will be working in partnership with the Scarman Trust to achieve a sustainable future for Children can Do and also demonstrate how the project contributes to the ECM outcome Achieve Economic

Wellbeing – that effective action enables disadvantaged neighbourhoods to define and meet their needs.

2.5 Services Delivered from Schools

Schools have welcomed the opportunity to work more holistically as part of the three neighbourhood based extended schools projects being funded through Brighton and Hove Children's Fund including the On Track Project in Portslade. Schools have developed new ways of supporting the inclusion of vulnerable children and have developed partnerships with other agencies providing services both within schools and within local communities. The Children's Fund has influenced plans to develop local area based multi-agency teams working in clusters, providing preventative family support services. This is an opportunity to build on the work developed through the Children's Fund.

Outcomes From Schools Based Projects

Attendance

From 2004, Children's Fund services are being required to track the impact of their provision on attendance at school, as this is being identified as one of the indicators in relation to 'Enjoying and achieving'. 9 out of 14 Children's Fund schools showed improved attendance last year by an average of 1.3%. School attendance in the city improved overall in 2003-4 from the previous year.

On Track Project

This multi-agency project in Portslade, built around a cluster of schools has been highly praised by Ofsted in 2003:

'The support provided by the On Track Project is excellent by quickly bringing together many professionals in the community to support children and families.

This early intervention is a very significant reason why the pupils make progress and do not experience early failure.'

An evaluation questionnaire undertaken in 2004 by On Track Schools focussed on the 3 main principles of the Children's Fund: Prevention, Partnership and participation.

85%, 77% and 66% of those responding gave an '**excellent**' verdict for the project's achievement in those areas.

'To have people to refer troubled parents and children to really supports teachers who can then do their job, the child who can begin to access learning and parents who can be helped in their parenting. It enables schools to actually teach and to have children who are ready to learn.'

Primary school counselling

185 children and young people were offered counselling in the 13 Children's Fund and On Track primary schools between July 2003 to September 2004.

Counselling provided by counsellors employed by Hove YMCA, has been delivered in primary schools in all three extended school programmes, following the success of the service within the On track project in Portslade. Teachers, parents and children have reported a range of benefits to children's confidence, happiness and peer relationships. Recent evaluations of the impact of counselling have identified that for 81% of children receiving counselling, classroom learning improved. 89% of children reported they were happier following counselling. It is therefore proposed that this service is sustained and that over the three year period, school clusters move incrementally towards funding this service from school budgets either in full or in part, if other

funding can be secured. The extension of the primary school counselling service in the On Track project to include two additional schools in Portslade, is to develop a larger cluster of schools in order to have the capacity to fund and sustain counselling in the future.

Counselling could be provided within schools in communities in need, and individually to children in need in schools in other areas.

The Children's Commissioning Team are undertaking a service review of 'Emotional Wellbeing' and primary school counselling will be included in this review.

Parenting

Brighton and Hove Children's Fund have developed a number of successful models for supporting parents. These include parenting groups delivered in schools and other settings by Brighton and Hove Central Sure Start. These demonstrated how a flexible approach worked to support parents effectively, for example providing groups on Saturdays when parents were able to attend. Evaluations from the groups report improvements in parent's relationships with their children, management of behaviour and confidence and skills as parents. Some of the parenting work is being funded by Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) as part of the joint NRF and Children's Fund Programme in Hangleton and Knoll. Successful parenting models developed through the Children's Fund will inform the development of parenting support within the Children's Trust Partnership as part of 'Strengthening Families.'

LINX

LINX is a home visiting service delivered by Hove YMCA to parents of children attending clusters of schools as part of On Track and in Hangleton and Knoll. LINX offers families and carers a quick and easy access to a comprehensive and flexible range of professional child and family centred support. The service is delivered primarily in family's homes and is accessed through stakeholder schools entirely on a voluntary basis. It offers parents and carers the opportunity to address their own identified needs and outcomes. Parents express a high level of satisfaction with the service.

LINX has successfully engaged with many families who would previously have been considered most difficult to reach but in greatest need.

'The combination of their ability to be flexible and the parent's knowledge that LINX works only in the voluntary sector has given them a non-stigmatised and high profile in the school.

Without exception, parents engaging with LINX have found the service useful and in most cases the parents feedback is that the service has been invaluable.' (Teacher Co-ordinator)

Equalities

Brighton and Hove Children's Fund have a high commitment to equalities and to ensuring that in contracts and agreements with service providers, Children's Fund services will be available as a resource to all members of the community, and that no member of that community is discriminated against in this process, directly or indirectly.

Brighton and Hove Partnership Board use monitoring information to assess the reach of Children's Fund services and initiatives to specific groups experiencing disadvantage.

In the monitoring period April to June 2004, 18% of children and young people regularly supported by the Children's Fund were from Black and minority ethnic groups.

28% of children and young people who were regularly supported were disabled or, had a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or receive support under the SEN code of practice 2001.

Brighton and Hove Children's Fund have set targets where appropriate for services to extend their reach to certain groups. The Partnership Board has also made a commitment to providing training and support to providers to increase accessibility of services.

Outcomes for Hard to Reach Learners.

The joint Children's Fund and Neighbourhood Renewal Fund programme in Hangleton and Knoll is funding the Workers Educational Association (WEA) to provide flexible, accessible learning opportunities for hard to reach learners that respond to needs identified by these parents during outreach work.

This includes work with Black and minority ethnic learners who have undertaken English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses.

The development work identifies and supports progression routes for learners to access further training, development opportunities, volunteering or community activities, or employment.

Progression routes identified so far have included:

Shadowing bilingual classroom assistants

WEA Arts courses

ICT courses

Work with Bengali Language School

ESOL reading and writing courses

Childminding course

It is recognised that the full range of services offered within school based projects funded through the Children's Fund at present can not be sustained long term.

Over the next year Brighton and Hove Children's Fund will work with the three clusters of schools to influence priorities for future clusters of schools in the city, Sustainable sources of funding for initiatives such as Breakfast Clubs will be explored along with ways of maintaining the cultural changes schools have made to support children at risk of social exclusion will be identified.

2.6 Youth Inclusion and Support Project (YISP)

The Brighton and Hove YISP has attracted a high level of national and local attention. The project has a number of unique features including a community-based approach, Speech and Language Therapy input and the absence of a formal panel to allocate referrals. The project has already been very successful both in receiving referrals and positive feedback from parents, young people and agencies involved despite being only launched in February 2004. The community based preventative approach and high level of involvement of parents and young people in the programme are consistent with the priorities and principles of Brighton and Hove Children's Fund and the Children's Trust Partnership. The

development of further YISPs in Brighton and Hove is being considered. Management and consultancy links with the Hangleton and Knoll YISP and sustainability in the future would be part of this process.

The YISP is placed within the Public Safety Directorate and as part of the Partnership Community Safety Team (PCST). This has opened new partnership opportunities for joint work supporting children and families experiencing Racial Harassment and enhanced liaison with the city's Anti-Social Behaviour team who engage with young people at risk of obtaining ASBO's. Early intervention and preventative practices are also being developed with Brighton and Hove Police

The Youth Inclusion Support Project is placed managerially within The Brighton & Hove City Partnership Community Safety Team (PCST). The YISP Steering group has representatives from the PCST, the YOT, the Police, Housing and Voluntary sectors as well as the Children's Fund. Through this process an engagement between the Preventative Strategy and the Community Safety Agenda is developing that will inform Local Area Agreements, and specifically integrated working arrangements around safer and stronger communities.

Outcomes from the Youth Inclusion and Support Project

6 Young people and their parents who were involved in the project, praised the YISP in a presentation in September 2004. Young people who had been working with the project over the summer showed a short film they had made together and demonstrated some of the exercises they had used to help them think about their behaviour and its effect on others. The summer holiday is a period where there is frequently an increase in incidents of anti-social behaviour. However the young people had shown a very high commitment to the project and none had been involved in incidents of anti-social behaviour during that time. Parents commented positively on the increase in skills and confidence the young people had gained.

Working closely with schools from the Hangleton and Knoll extended schools programme, YISP co-ordinated a Transition Project for 13 young people moving from year 6 to year 7. Parents have commented on how their children's self esteem and confidence, alongside school achievement and attendance, has been improved as a result of participating in the 4 month programme

2.7 Participation and Communication with Children and Young People.

Brighton and Hove Children's Fund in partnership with Coalition 4 Youth has ensured that the active and effective participation of children and young people, in ways that are real and meaningful to them, permeate throughout the development and delivery of all its services.

It has ensured this through a combination of

- Building children and young people's participation in at the beginning of all its service development
- Coalition 4 Youth have brought their strong ethical participation framework to support the development and delivery of Children's Fund services.
- Following the sound values and principles of participation within the Children's Fund Golden rules.

- Ensuring all Children's projects are fully committed to the principles of active and effective participation.
- Monitoring and evaluating whether the continued participation of children and young people is active and effective.

There are numerous examples of how participation has been built into projects from their beginnings and these include;

- Children and young people shaped the development of the Children Can Do grants project through the use of interactive activities and events to design logo's, publicity, resources and processes. Their involvement has continued to play a key role in the projects delivery, with C&YP playing an active role in the grants panel, the design and delivery of the grants panel training, and attending briefing and celebration events where they can share the skills and experience.
- Children and young people's participation has been integral to the development of the Family Group Conferencing project, including their involvement in the design of logo's, publicity, resources and processes. Children have created training material for Co-ordinators and other professional's, and a member of the young people's forum sits on the FGC steering group and Advisory Group for the research into Advocacy.
- Children in one of the Hangleton and Knoll schools led a recruitment process to appoint playtime pals, to promote positive behaviour in the playground. This included, drawing up a set of criteria they were looking for in the role, looking at application forms submitted by children wanting to be playtime pals, and interviewing / selecting prospective candidates.
- The Children's Fund in partnership with Coalition 4 Youth have maintained a strong ongoing involvement with schools. Support has included working with the school council's on individual workshops and training, developing linkages with the UK Youth Parliament, PSHE team, and co-facilitating the school council celebration events.

There are several important partnerships of youth participation that have been established through the Children's Fund including UK Youth Parliament, Youth Council Steering group and school council's. The Children's Fund will continue to maintain and build upon these partnerships through meetings, newsletters and the school council conference. Communication with young people about the Children's Fund Delivery Plan will take place through these routes.

In addition, the youth council Steering group are planning a city wide consultation with children and young people in the city, which will inform future planning, and act to ensure the continued participation of children and young people.

Outcomes from Participation

Children's Fund services are demonstrating the benefits to children and young people of 'making a positive contribution' by showing how involving children and young people is leading to improvements in confidence and skills. A recent focus group with children who had participated on the grants panel for 'Children Can Do', conducted by the University of Brighton, showed that there was unanimous agreement from the group that it was an enjoyable experience. It was very

clear that the children felt a sense of achievement, that they had some control and that their decisions had an impact on the experiences of others. The researcher concluded: 'The points raised by the young people in this group highlight positive results for the Children's Fund in terms of increase in 'positive self regard' and the 'ability to interact positively with others'.

2.8 Challenges and Opportunities

i) Prevention

Ring fenced preventative grants allow the development of innovative services without competition from the pressures on acute services, which remain extremely high. The National Evaluation of the Children's Fund identifies that: 'The extra money from the Children's Fund has not been enough to resolve the 'refocusing debate', i.e. the tensions between present demands for high level intervention and the shift towards more preventative approaches. This has significant implications for the profile of prevention in any new collaborative arrangements.'

Pressure on resources remains high in Brighton and Hove, particularly due to high numbers of looked after children and young people. The Children's Trust Partnership faces challenges in realigning resources to support preventative initiatives such as the Children's Fund, in this context it is critical that prevention has been identified as one of the priorities of the Children's Trust Partnership. The Children's Fund is contributing to a coherent approach to reducing the demand on acute services and the Family Group Conference project has demonstrated that using FGCs to plan to meet children's needs can support children remaining with their families and communities.

ii) Cultural Change

Brighton and Hove Children's Fund can provide positive examples of cultural change in practice. The National Evaluation of the Children's Fund highlighted the importance of vertical learning, including opportunities for strategic leaders to learn from the practical experiences of working in new ways at the front line. The Learning Labs developed in Brighton and Hove (see section 1) provide an example of this process in action.

The Brighton and Hove Children's Fund Partnership Board and On Track Steering Group recognise the importance of publicising and disseminating the successes of Children's Fund projects and have prioritised this over the next year. A range of approaches including a series of practice seminars is being developed.

2.9 Outcomes and Indicators

Contribution to ECM Outcomes

The Children's Trust Partnership has agreed city wide outcomes for the Children's Trust Partnership based on the five outcomes in Every Child Matters. These are outlined in the Children's Trust Partnership Strategy (see below).

Better outcomes for children young people and their families

- Fewer children and young people suffering harm and neglect and more children and young people safeguarded from risks and the potential to offend – and diverted from offending behaviour
- More children and young people getting the most out of life, fulfilling their individual potential, whatever that might be and developing appropriate skills for adulthood, active citizenship, and economic well being.
- More children and young people enjoying the best possible physical and mental health, healthy lifestyles, and sustainable well being
- All parents, carers able to access support which builds on their existing skills and understands the diversity of family life in order to strengthen their confidence, resilience, and effectiveness.

In relation to some Brighton and Hove Children's Fund projects, for example, 'Children Can Do' child centred grant funding scheme, children and young people are themselves identifying their own outcomes for the project or activity they are engaged in under the broad ECM themes, and the impact of the activities will be measured according to whether the outcomes identified by the children have been achieved. Learning from this process will inform outcome setting within the service review, redesign and commissioning process being developed within the Children's Trust Partnership.

There are specific projects such as the Family Group Conference project and the Youth Inclusion and Support Project who are contributing directly to the outcome 'Staying Safe' by maintaining children and young people safely within their families and communities. However, children's safety is a priority throughout all Brighton and Hove Children's Fund services. Projects and activities developed at community level are supported to develop child protection policies, access child safety training and CRB checks.

Daybreak Family Group Conference Project

Empowering family and child centred decision making process for children in crisis.

Every Child Matters (ECM) Outcome: Stay Safe

Children are placed safely and securely, and where possible within their families and communities.

Children's cultural roots, identity and self esteem are maintained.

Children are diverted from public care.

Children are diverted from criminal proceedings and from re-offending.

Indicator: 75% of children and young people receiving Family Group Conferences remain within their families and communities.

ECM Outcome: Enjoying and Achieving

Children are maintained successfully at school, attendance improves.

Indicator: to improve school attendance of 70% of children and young people receiving Family Group Conferences prior to the first review meeting.

ECM Outcome: Making a Positive Contribution

Children and young people are empowered in decision making and are better satisfied with decisions made.

Children and young people develop self confidence and enterprising behaviour.

Indicator: For 90% of Family Group Conferences to include the participation of the child or young person.

Children Can Do Project

Child centred grant funding scheme for children and young people in disadvantaged communities.

ECM Outcomes: Be Healthy, Stay Safe Enjoying and Achieving

For the safety, health, education and wellbeing of children and young people in participating projects to have improved as measured through self reports, case studies and use of a child centred monitoring tool.

Indicator: For 70% of projects to result in improved outcomes for children and young people involved as measured by a child centred monitoring tool.

ECM Outcome: Make a Positive Contribution

Children and young people are empowered in decision making and are better satisfied with decisions made.

Children and young people develop self confidence and enterprising behaviour.

Indicator: for 100% of project proposals to come from children and young people in socially excluded communities

ECM Outcome: Children and Young People Live in Decent Homes and Communities

Children and young people in socially excluded communities (with greater needs and less chances in life) are enabled to define and meet their needs.

Indicator: for 100% of project proposals to come from children and young people in socially excluded communities themselves.

Extended School Projects

Three neighbourhood based multi-agency extended schools programmes built around clusters of schools and including the On Track Project.

ECM Outcome: Enjoy and Achieve

Children and young people at risk of social exclusion attend and enjoy school, achieve educational standards according to their ability and achieve personal development and enjoy recreation.

Indicator: For 10 out of 14 participating Children's Fund schools to improve school attendance by at least 0.3% compared to 2004 figures.

Indicator: For 70% of children who have experienced Children's Fund initiatives to show value added between relevant key stages.

ECM Outcome: Making a Positive Contribution

Children and young people in school contribute to and are empowered in decision making and are better satisfied with decisions made.

Children and young people develop self confidence and enterprising behaviour.

Indicator: 70% of children receiving Children's Fund initiatives report improved confidence and skills.

Primary School Counselling

One to one counselling support provided in school setting.

ECM Outcome: Be Healthy

Children and young people demonstrate improved mental and emotional health and wellbeing.

Indicator: For 73% of children and young people to show greater confidence and self esteem.

Indicator: For 80% of children and young people who have received counselling to report feeling happier at the end of sessions.

Parenting Initiatives

Home visiting or parenting groups provided to parents attending schools in extended school clusters.

ECM Outcome: Parents and carers provide safe homes and stability

ECM Outcome: Parents and carers promote healthy lifestyles

ECM Outcome: Parents and carers support learning

Parents and carers gain skills and confidence in parenting as a result of support.

Indicator: 70% of parents who have received parenting support report greater skill and confidence.

Indicator: 70% of parents receiving parenting support report improved relationship with their child &/or improved behaviour.

Youth Inclusion and Support Project

Neighbourhood based crime prevention project providing packages of support to children and young people at risk of being involved in crime

ECM Outcome: Stay Safe

Children and young people are safe from crime and anti-social behaviour.
Outcome: Making a Positive Contribution
Children and young people choose not to offend, re-offend and engage in anti-social behaviour.
Children and young people develop confidence and enterprising behaviour.
Indicator: for 70% of objectives outlined in Integrated support plans to be met.
Indicator: 10% reduction in levels of offending by young people aged under 13 living in the Hangleton and Knoll area.

Progress will be measured against all indicators at 6 monthly reviews and all will have a target date of 31.3.06.

3. Partnership and Management Structure

3.1 Governance structure

As a pathfinder Children's Trust, Brighton and Hove have established an integrated governance structure for the Children's Trust Partnership (Appendix A).

Brighton and Hove Children's Fund Partnership Board report to the Children's Trust Partnership Co-ordination Group. The Children's Fund are represented on this strategic group by the Commissioning Manager for preventative services who has responsibility for the Children's Fund. The delivery plan for Brighton and Hove Children's Fund has been submitted and agreed by the process of approval established for the Children's Trust Partnership, which includes submission to the Children's Trust Partnership Co-ordination Group and the Chief Officers Group. Because of the limitations imposed by the timescales, the delivery plan will be submitted to the Children, Families and Schools Committee within the city Council and the PCT Board before submission on 31.12.04. The delivery plan will be finally presented to the Children's Trust Board on 25th January 2005.

3.2 Management Structure

From April 2004, the Children's Fund Programme Manager has taken on a wider remit as Commissioning Manager for preventative services within the Children's Commissioning Team, managed by the Children's Services Commissioner for Brighton and Hove, a joint appointment by both the City Council and Brighton and Hove City Primary Care Trust. The Commissioning process will be described in more detail in section 4.

3.3 Partnership Board

Brighton and Hove Children's Fund Partnership Board have representation at Assistant Director level from Children, Families and Schools and from General Manager level from Southdowns Health NHS Trust, the local provider health trust, as well as four representatives from the voluntary and community sector.

From January 2005, the board will have 2 new co-chairs, one co chair is the school advisor for SEN within the City Council, and the other is a senior member of Hove YMCA, the largest local voluntary organisation in Brighton and Hove working with children and young people.

3.4 Youth Offending Team

Brighton and Hove Children's Fund retain close links with the local YOT and the Operational Manager is a member of the Brighton and Hove Children's Fund Partnership Board. There has also been positive contact with the Youth Justice Board and in October 2004, the SEO from the Youth Justice Board with national responsibility for Youth Inclusion and Support Panels and Anti Social behaviour, visited Brighton and Hove in order to see the work being undertaken locally through the Children's Fund. He met with representatives from the YOT, Brighton and Hove Children's Fund, the SENCO and Headteacher from a local school, a parent whose son had been a YISP client, and the Hangleton & Knoll project (a local youth and community project) as well as the YISP manager.

3.5 Communication and Consultation

The Commissioning Manager for preventative services responsible for the Children's Fund chairs the Communication and Consultation Project Team for the Children's Trust Partnership. This ensures that the learning from the Children's Fund concerning the involvement and participation of the voluntary and community sector and of children, young people and families can inform and influence the development of communication and consultation within the Children's Trust Partnership.

3.6 Voluntary and Community Sector Participation

Since April 2004, the number of elected representatives from the Community and Voluntary Sector who sit on the Children's Trust Partnership Co-ordination Group has been increased from three to six, ensuring a more effective voice for the sector in strategic planning. There is also an observer seat for a voluntary and community sector representative on the Children's Trust Board. In addition to this, a series of ongoing interactive workshops has been established, led by the Children's Commissioning Team in partnership with the six voluntary and community sector representatives and the local Community and Voluntary Sector Forum. These workshops are open to voluntary and community sector organisations working with children and young people and families and have provided an effective and dynamic mechanism whereby the sector has been able to contribute directly to the development of strategy and policy in relation to the Children's Trust Partnership. Three workshops have taken place so far and had a very high level of attendance and engagement from the VCS. Further workshops are planned.

3.7 Participation of Children and Young People and Parents

To help promote the philosophy of child centred service redesign outlined in Every Child Matters and the Children's NSF, an active participation strategy is

being developed within the Children's Trust Partnership in conjunction with children, young people and parents, as well as the Patient and Public Involvement Forums within the Health sector. This work is building on the participation work developed through Brighton and Hove Children's Fund and is being co-ordinated by the Communication and Consultation project team chaired by the Commissioning Manager for preventative services. The work with children and young people is also being supported by the Children's Fund Participation worker who is Project Manager for Coalition 4 Youth.

Youth Council

Since February 2004 a group of about 20 young people aged between 12 and 21 have been meeting together on a regular basis, with the aim of increasing the participation of children and young people in the Children's Trust Partnership. The group is made up of young people from a range of different groups and organisations in the City and has formed a Steering Group to set up a Youth Council. Their aim is to give children and young people in Brighton and Hove a direct voice and a scrutiny role in relation to decision making within the Children's Trust Partnership. Following a successful presentation to the Chief Officer's Group in September 2004, members of the Steering Group gave a presentation to the Children's Trust Board on 18th October, outlining their proposals for developing an inclusive Youth Council in the City. The proposal was supported by the Children's Trust Board, and a further report was requested by the Board in January 2005, outlining in more detail the business plan for establishing the Youth Council including tasks, timescales and support needs for the Steering Group. Since the presentation the Steering Group attended a successful residential and have established subgroups to work on the constitution and the business plan. The Steering Group now includes members of the UK Youth Parliament and meetings are taking place to look at the relationship with School Councils.

Parents Forum

Although there is a considerable amount of work taking place in the City promoting parent's involvement, there is at present no overarching forum to co-ordinate and collate views from parent representative groups in order to inform decision making within the Children's Trust Partnership. A launch meeting in October 2004, co-ordinated by the Commissioning Manager for preventative services, was attended by over 30 parents and 16 support workers, representing a diverse range of parent's group across the city. There was considerable support for establishing a city wide parent's forum with a formal scrutiny role in relation to decision making for the Children's Trust Partnership. A Steering Group of 8 parents and workers was established to take the issues forward.

4. Proposed Activities

4.1 Context

The approach of the Children's Fund locally and nationally is to focus support on children and young people at risk of social exclusion. Brighton and Hove Children's Fund has targeted disadvantaged communities in addition to children in greater need. This key principle underpinned by evidence is that focusing on disadvantaged communities and targeting effort where it is known children have a disadvantaged start in life will achieve a positive difference to outcomes in the longer term.

The Children's Trust Partnership has been analysing levels of need in the city according to a range of criteria. This needs analysis has informed the Children's Fund Delivery Plan. Needs analysis confirms that Hangleton and Knoll and the city Centre remain communities of need.

The CTP has agreed a new framework for delivering children's services in Brighton and Hove which proposes a core programme of services that will be available to all families and children in the City and a targeted service of enhanced and intensive services which caters for the specific needs of communities, families and individuals.

The levels of service that will be delivered and which will drive the service redesign process are:

i)Core Programme:

The agreed range of services that will be available to all communities and children and families in the city, including primary care and schools.

ii)Targeted services:

The enhanced and intensive services that focus on specific needs:

Communities in Need

Programmes of service for people living in disadvantaged communities are known to be effective. They may include health promotion targeted at groups of people in the community and include, for example, information services concerning, smoking, diet and exercise or Sure Start and Neighbourhood Renewal programmes. The extended schools programme is a key part of this approach, and includes the three extended school projects developed through Children's Fund and On Track.

Families in Need

Families will be assessed and tailor made services will be delivered via a family health plan to meet the whole family's needs which may include benefits advice,

family support, community nursing, help with substance misuse and mental health. Support from early years providers and from schools will underpin the package of services provided to families in need.

Children in Need

Plans will be drawn up for each individual child on the basis of assessed needs, which will include any specialist support. Particular attention will be given to meeting the educational needs of children and young people who are at risk or who are looked after by the local authority.

4.2 Commissioning and Integration of Initiatives

The Children's Trust Partnership has agreed that integrated commissioning will be the method whereby integrated service delivery will be achieved, based on the child's journey.

A comprehensive service review, redesign, and procurement process has been developed, which at every stage has involvement of children and families. Service reviews will be holistic and thematic and will adopt a whole systems approach.

The first phase of thematic reviews has been agreed. A review of 'Strengthening Families' has been proposed for phase two early in 2005. Children's Fund services will be included in this review process which will define the three levels of service; core, enhanced and intensive, and the eligibility criteria that will trigger a move from one level of service to another, based on assessment of need and available resources.

The service review, redesign and procurement process will decide on the pattern of service for the future and will redesign services across the age range and across the range of initiatives that form an integrated children's service. Brighton and Hove Children's Fund has demonstrated a commitment to joint working and integrated provision of service from the outset. Brighton and Hove Children's Fund was the first, and in 2002 the only programme in the South East to have an integrated Neighbourhood Renewal and Children's Fund programme that has been developed as an extended school project in the Hangleton and Knoll area of the city. The Commissioning manager responsible for the Children's Fund sits on the Partnership Board of Central Sure Start and both joint commissioning and joint delivery of service have taken place. For example, parenting programmes within Sure Start have been extended through the Children's Fund to provide support to parents of school age children.

4.3 Local Area Agreements

Brighton and Hove has been identified as a pilot area for Local area Agreements (LAA's).

LAA's focus on agreed and shared outcomes across the city. This is also an aim of The Children's Trust Partnership for children's services. The three blocks that make up the LAA are:

- Children and young people
- Safer and stronger communities
- Healthier communities and older people

The relationship between the Children’s Trust Partnership and the LAA is still to be clarified, as are the links between the proposed Public Service Board, the Chief Officer’s Group and the Children’s Trust Board. Discussions are taking place to identify potential funding streams that would become part of LAA’s. Decisions would depend on the risks and benefits and the relationship to wider developments in services. For funding streams relating to children, the relationship between the LAA and the Children’s Trust Partnership will be crucial. Four key national outcomes for LAA’s have been identified:

- To reduce crime by 15% and further in high crime areas, and to reassure the public, reducing the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour.
- To have cleaner, greener safer public spaces
- To improve the standard of life for people in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods and ensure service providers are more responsive to neighbourhood needs
- To empower local people to have a greater voice and influence over local decision making and delivery of services

The Children’s Fund is making a contribution to these outcomes. For example, one of the targets of the Youth Inclusion and Support Project in Hangleton and Knoll is to reduce youth crime in the area by 10%.

The Children’s Fund can also contribute learning about effective methods whereby children and young people in disadvantaged communities can be empowered to identify their own needs and solutions to these needs. Children Can Do, developed in partnership with the Scarman Trust, provides a model for this process. Project applications for Children Can Do are written by children and young people in socially excluded communities who are aged 5 to 13. Project proposals broadly meet the ECM outcomes. 60% of the members of the panel that make decisions on applications are children and young people aged from 8-13. 40 projects have been funded across the city. The majority of applications from children and young people are identifying opportunities to meet together and engage in safe, supervised play and positive activities as meeting their needs.

4.4 Proposed Activities

Brighton and Hove Children’s Fund proposes to continue support for the 6 identified projects over the next three years.

The Brighton and Hove Children’s Fund Partnership Board has identified a number of principles:

A. Continued support for the On Track Project in Portslade

The On Track project should continue to receive a level of funding (30%) proportional to the Children's Fund budget as the budget tapers down over the next three years.

B. Family Group Conference Project

A two year contract will be negotiated from 2005-7 to provide stability to the project during the period of migration to the Children's Trust arrangements. There is an expectation that the FGC project will feed into the 'Strengthening Families' review undertaken in 2005 by the Children's Commissioning Team (the Commissioning Manager for the Children's Fund is a member of this team. The development of Children's Centres also provides an opportunity to look at provision of FGCs for 0-4 year olds.

Further sources of funding are being explored including a LPSA bid.

C. Children Can Do

Brighton and Hove Children's Fund are committed to supporting this project over the next three years. A two year contract is proposed for the period 2005-7. The Scarman Trust are currently exploring additional funding for this project in addition to the Children's Fund to support sustainability.

D. Schools Projects

Funding for school based projects in Hangleton and Knoll and the City Centre as well as On Track is planned to continue over the next three years. The development of extended schools, the cluster pilots and the strengthening families review will all inform this process.

E. Youth Inclusion and Support Project (YISP)

It is anticipated that support for this project will continue over the next three years.

This will be informed by appropriate service review and redesign processes and further decisions made by the Youth Justice Board.

4.5 Information Sharing and Common Assessment Framework

Brighton and Hove is working towards the Information Sharing and Common Assessment agenda of the DfES through a programme of technical, legal and workforce development and cultural change.

The experience of the Children's Fund is informing this development especially in relation to consent based information sharing developed within the On Track project. The lead on the development of information sharing and common assessment is located within the Children's Commissioning Team, and supported by a multi agency Common Assessment Project Team. To support and inform

the work of the Children's Trust Partnership and the successful implementation of the Common Assessment Framework, a number of 'pilot services' are taking place, working with existing multi agency teams of practitioners to explore systems and test tools and ideas. The pilot services share learning and experience through a monthly cluster co-ordinators group, which includes representatives from schools and services working both with the Children's Fund and Sure Start.

The multi agency Common Assessment project team have developed a set of clear essential criteria for CAF as part of their response to the national consultation on Common Assessment by the DfES. These criteria emphasise the need for CAF to support an inclusive family centred way of working which promotes partnership working and family empowerment. This approach is consent based, builds on family strengths, and involves a wide range of family members including children and young people. It also links back to the family's desired outcomes throughout the process. Information sharing and assessment systems developed within Children's Fund locally are consistent with this approach. The Common Assessment Project Team and pilot services are in the process of responding to the DfES consultation on the All Child Index, in line with Section 12 of the forthcoming Children Bill. Children's Fund services in common with all other children's services within the Children's Trust Partnership will be integrated within the Information Sharing and CAF processes developed within the Partnership.

4.6 Services Supported in 2005-6

See separate table Appendix 2

5. Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation

Brighton and Hove Children's Fund has demonstrated a high commitment to monitoring and evaluation.

5.1 Performance Management and Quality Assurance

Each service commissioned by Brighton and Hove Children's Fund has a formal contract or service level agreement outlining the service to be provided, the outcomes expected and how these will be measured.

As well as being required to submit quarterly monitoring data, services are subject to 6 monthly reviews where progress is reported against outcomes and targets. Reviews also look at project changes and developments, successes and difficulties and evidence submitted concerning participation, consultation and user feedback. On Track services have three monthly monitoring and evaluation meetings.

For larger services, periodic presentations and reports to the Children's Fund Partnership Board are required.

A case study format has been used by services to provide rich information about the real experience of families and children using services and the impact on their lives.

Project visits to see services in operation and talk to users of the service and staff have been made by members of the Partnership Board. A new system is being introduced whereby Partnership Board members develop specific links with services and can develop a greater depth of knowledge and expertise in relation to their link projects. This will enable better quality information to be available to the Partnership Board and will contribute to effective monitoring.

5.2 Monitoring

Brighton and Hove Children's Fund has an excellent record of accessing monitoring data from providers. Training and support is provided by Brighton and Hove Children's Fund to staff in services to support this. Reviews and project visits provide cross checking information to ensure as far as possible the accuracy of data submitted.

Using Monitoring Information

Monitoring information is used as a performance management tool. For example, data was analysed to inform the Race Equality Impact Assessment undertaken by Brighton and Hove Children's Fund in March 2004. Information from the monitoring is collated and reviewed in the Partnership Board meetings on a quarterly basis, so trends and issues can be detected and acted on. Monitoring information also informed target setting for contracts, for example, a target has been set for the Family Group Conference project to improve access to Family Group Conferences for BME families from 6% of referrals to 10% of referrals by March 2005.

5.3 Local Evaluation

Brighton and Hove Children's Fund is continuing to work with the University of Brighton to undertake the local evaluation of the Children's Fund.

The evaluation has been refocused and will cover these areas;

- Direct evaluation with children and young people of the outcome and impact of Children's Fund activities, consistent with ECM outcomes.
- The development of a range of tools that can be used with children and young people to evaluate services. These will be available to a range of practitioners to support them in evaluating services.
- Evaluation of the outcomes of activities funded through Children Can Do child centred grant funding scheme.
- Evaluation of the impact of 'making a contribution': the impact of participation on the development of the confidence, skills and abilities of children and young people.

- The Coalition For Youth is evaluating the participatory approach of the Youth Inclusion Support Project through exit interviews with parents and young people who have been involved in the YISP.

The findings of the Local evaluation have informed the development of the programme to date. For example, information arising from the evaluation of the role of teacher co-ordinators in an earlier phase of the Local evaluation resulted in the development of multi agency meetings within the school clusters.

5.4 Further Research

Further Research

Brighton and Hove Children's Fund has commissioned specific research into the impact of advocacy for children and young people attending Family Group Conferences on the plans and outcomes of Conferences.

The Brighton and Hove project is at the forefront in providing independent advocacy for children who are having Family Group Conferences, through the Children's Rights and Advocacy Service. The aim of independent advocacy is to support and enhance the participation of all children and young people in the family in the Family Group Conference and to strengthen the child's voice in decision making.

The UK leads the field in the involvement of children in FGC's. This is ground breaking research in an area where there is enormous national and international interest, but as yet little research evidence.

The research will be of international interest and plans are being made to disseminate the research widely when it is available later in 2005.