

Subject:	Children's Services Partnership Forum		
Date of Meeting:	18th September 2017		
Report of:	Executive Director – Families, Children & Learning		
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Ward(s) affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the function and work of the Children's Services Partnership Forum
- 1.2 Brighton & Hove: The Connected City, our sustainable community strategy, gives Children & Young People as a strategic priority for the city. This sets out the vision that all have the absolute best start in life and enjoy a stable, healthy childhood, a good education, fun new experiences and the confidence, ability and opportunity to obtain meaningful employment
- 1.3 This is further reflected in the Council's Corporate Plan where we set out our ambition to provide high quality education, keeping children & young people safe, helping them access social and cultural opportunities and being a good corporate parent by creating the best opportunities for children in care.
- 1.4 This work is further clarified in the Families, Children & Learning Directorate Plan 2017-2020, which has an annual update detailing the range of actions undertaken that year to support our city vision.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Committee note and support the ongoing work of the Children's Services Partnership Forum.

3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Following the refresh of the city's Sustainable Community Strategy, it was decided to create a new overarching partnership forum to focus on all elements of services for children and young people across the city.
- 3.2 The partnership forum has been designed to be discursive rather than business or decision orientated. It does not hold any budget or resource; rather it connects organisations and services together to deliver real results for children, young people and their families.

3.3 It creates a space (that does not otherwise exist in this form) where people that work in all areas of services to children and young people can come together and start talking about how their work could be better designed and delivered to meet needs in the city. It is a chance for a wide range of stakeholders to meet and consider big issues facing children and young people in the city and to develop a strategic response.

3.4 A membership list was drawn together from existing partnership arrangements and includes the city council, health providers, Police, probation, schools and colleagues, community and voluntary sector organisations and parent representatives.

3.5 The inaugural meeting was held in June 2014, was well attended and very positively received. There have since been 3 further meetings of the Forum. The contents and outcomes of the inaugural and the second meeting (on emotional wellbeing and mental health) have been previously been shared with committee. A summary of the subsequent two forum events are given below.

3.6 Advice, Information and Guidance for post school options

This event had a much more focussed theme and for the first time involved young people actively participating in the event, giving presentations on their experiences of the advice given when considering what to do post school. We also heard from Gary Peters and the 'Be the Change' events, Marcelo Staricoff from Balfour Primary School and Alison Browning from Varndean School.

Participants were asked to move around the venue, engage in conversation with a range of young people and fellow forum members and answer the following questions (set by a group of young people in a pre-meet),

- How do we get information, advice and guidance to people who are 18 and over?
- How do we make information, advice and guidance interesting and relevant to young people?
- How can information, advice and guidance be delivered to take into account the individual needs of young people
- Why do schools value further education (FE eg college) more than other options?
- How can minority groups be better supported in choosing their next steps after school?
- Why don't schools teach basic skills about being employed / basic workers rights?

3.7 Creating a child & young person friendly city

This forum event took place in May 2017 and asked participants to consider the following questions:

- What is your interpretation of what a child & young person friendly city might mean?
- Which children and young people are we talking about – something that works for all or should we focus our attention on vulnerable / disadvantaged groups?
- We also invited people to share what great work is already underway and then what participants were going to pledge to take away from the event and do differently in their place of work or activity to promote the idea of a cyp friendly city.

A report will come to a future CYPS committee meeting on the proposed next steps for developing a Child & Young Person Friendly Brighton & Hove.

3.8 Following the forum meetings a report is shared that contains a summary of discussions at the event and ideas on how to take forward new solutions in the individual groups and organisations represented at the event.

3.9 A recent Peer Challenge activity highlighted the importance of having an overarching strategic partnership that pulls together a lot of disparate work with children and families across the city.

3.10 The partnership forum has committed to meet bi-annually.

3.11 Members of the forum are clear that it is their responsibility to reflect on messages heard at the events and to take forward that thinking and further conversations back in their 'home' organisations or to continue discussions with partners.

4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

4.1 In light of our vision for children and young people in the city and our commitment to providing space for their voice to be heard through all we do, we need a mechanisation for bringing professionals and the young people together. They can then hear about recent developments, talk through issues, start to formulate solutions and contribute to strategic thinking across the city.

4.2 This partnership forum provides the opportunity for that activity and is working well.

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

5.1 In the creation of the Partnership Forum, partners were consulted on their views via Brighton & Hove Connected, our strategic partnership.

5.2 Children and young people are involved in each meeting, including co designing agendas and making presentations.

5.3 Membership of the partnership forum is always subject to review to allow for a wide and representative membership.

5.4 Feedback is collected at each event to ensure the partnership forum remains useful and effective.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 In conclusion, the four partnership forum events held so far have been well received and all parties want to build on this, see the work continue and develop over the coming years.

7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 7.1 The work of the Children's Services Partnership Forum will be met from within existing resources

Finance Officer Consulted: Louise Hoten

Date: 04/07/17

Legal Implications:

- 7.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report

Lawyer Consulted: Elizabeth Culbert

Date: 28/06/17

Equalities Implications:

- 7.3 The Partnership Forum seeks to better understand experiences of our vulnerable children & young people, including those of protected characteristics, and to provide solutions to issues raised.

- 7.4 Any work that city organisations or groups take forward as a result of conversations at the partnership forum would be subject to the usual policies and practices around equalities, including the public sector equality duty for due regard and the need for equalities impact assessments.

Sustainability Implications:

- 7.5 Through an effective partnership forum we can reduce waste and duplication in service delivery and promote health and happiness in the city.

Any Other Significant Implications:

- 7.6 N/A

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. None

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents

1. None