

# Gateshead Change for Children

Christmas 2007

'A change for children newsletter for all practitioners and managers working with children and young people'

## Accelerating the pace of change

In the summer, we embarked on an ambitious programme of reviews to deliver recommendations around how services for children and young people should be delivered in the future.

The meeting of the Integrated Children's Services Project Board on 7 December marked a significant step in how we bring services more closely together in Gateshead to improve outcomes for children and young people.

The Board considered the proposals in relation to three key reviews:

- Area working
- Social work services for children and families
- Services for young offenders

It is also setting away and monitoring the work around family support, services for children with disabilities and child and adolescent mental health services.

This festive edition of Change for Children News gives you, the children's services workforce, the key details about each review and what the Board agreed. Most of the proposals were welcomed, however a challenge was issued to accelerate the pace of change and be sure that services were organised seamlessly across the whole continuum of need.

We are in challenging yet exciting times where savings efficiencies and budget pressures cause us to need to continuously improve and adapt in spite of our Outstanding status (Ofsted).

I'd like to give my personal thanks to those who led on and contributed to the work of the reviews at such a busy time. For those who haven't yet been involved, we will need your views and expertise in the New Year.

Full proposal and review documentation considered by the Project Board is available at [www.gatesheadcyptrust.co.uk](http://www.gatesheadcyptrust.co.uk)

*Have a very merry Christmas and a happy new year.*



*Maggie Atkinson,  
Group Director Learning & Children,  
and Director of Children Services*

### Change for Children Programme

Gateshead Council, Civic Centre, Gateshead NE8 1HH.

Tel: (0191) 433 8353, Fax: (0191) 477 6645

e-mail: [change4children@gateshead.gov.uk](mailto:change4children@gateshead.gov.uk)



# Area Working



In our Children and Young People's Plan 2006-09 we said we would introduce multi-disciplinary teams providing early intervention support for families so that Parents, carers, children and young people can access more services in their communities (Priority 5). Chris Nevis, Head of Service Children and Young People's Services, who had been supported by a core group of managers, presented a proposal to the Board which would make this priority a reality.

It was agreed that the core team should now work and consult with partners and other stakeholders to implement a structure with 5 co-located area teams linked to the neighbourhood management areas. This would be done by integrating existing services. At this stage, the likely services would include:

- Early years services

- Health visitors and midwives
- Parenting
- Play services
- Family support
- Some Children's Fund projects that will be re-commissioned in April 2008
- Youth and community learning services
- Connexions
- YOT prevention services
- Substance misuse
- Some child and adolescent mental health services
- Teenage Pregnancy Services
- Ethnic Minority and Traveller Advisory Services
- Volunteers & mentoring services

There will be an Area Manager responsible for each area who will also hold a lead responsibility for a key strategic area for example the

delivery of impartial Information, Advice and Guidance. Proposals were also made to the Board around aligning other key services to the area teams including education psychology, education welfare, police and housing. These proposals need further development.

As part of the area working review two further proposals were agreed:

- Area Managers will be given a responsibility to manage the reduction of the number of panels and meetings about children and young people happening in their neighbourhood management area
- Workers whose job is about engaging children and young people in influencing service development and delivery will be aligned to ensure we are working to a single engagement plan.

## Social work services for children and families



Frances Powell, Head of Service Children and Families, following a whole system review of social work services, presented proposals around how they could be re-modelled to create a more co-ordinated, multi skilled approach to assessment, planning and review.

The Board agreed the following proposals for further development with stakeholders:

- Social work services for children and families would continue to be managed and delivered from a boroughwide arrangement but with closer working relationships with area teams. Area teams would be responsible for working with families requiring lower level, early intervention support.

- The social work service would consist of a single Referral and Assessment Team providing front line access and co-located with the Police Child Protection Unit and possibly specialist nurses; and two reconfigured case management teams with either one covering care planning and the other safeguarding and high risk children in need or two teams covering both functions. It was recognised that there needed to be further discussions about this element.
- An Integrated Looked After Children service for children in permanent care with dedicated case managers, a placement provider service and skills workers for co-ordinated

therapeutic and independent living support. The Board also required a close (potentially co-located) working relationship with the health team for looked after children and Raising Educational Achievement of Looked After Children team.

- No decision was made at the Board about how family support services should be organised in the future. Elements of family support are likely to be needed across both social work and area services and further discussion needs to take place around this particularly in the light of the current commissioning review into family support services. This review will report in January.

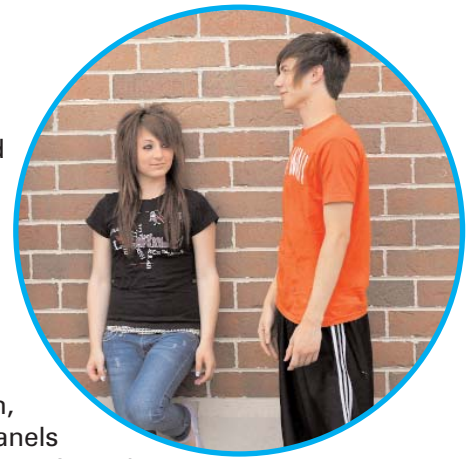
# Services for young offenders

Ken Johnson, currently acting as Head of Youth Offending presented proposals around arrangements to create a more integrated and effective approach to prevention and early intervention to reduce the number of children and young people who become involved in crime and anti social behaviour.

The Board agreed the following proposals for further development with stakeholders:

- YOT preventative services including Youth Inclusion and Support Panels (Amber programme), Youth Inclusion Projects, Anti Social Behaviour and Restorative Justice Services would be integrated with area working arrangements.

- The remaining functions would comprise of an enhanced Courts and Community team incorporating reparation, accommodation, referral order panels and volunteers, reprimands and final warnings.



- These decisions are likely to require changes in the current Yot management arrangements

## Other review work

Other reviews were not at the stage for key decisions at the Project Board on 7 December. Progress in relation to each is as follows:

- Family Support - a report with commissioning recommendations will be received by the Improve Wellbeing Board on 11 January 2008.
- Services for children with disabilities - a needs assessment which will form the first stage of the review will take place between January and March 2008 led by the Children with Disabilities Strategic Commissioning Group.
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services - a Project Initiation Document outlining the timescales and scope for the review will be approved in January 2008.

Other reviews affecting children's services are also now close to completion

- Special Educational Needs Review - Cabinet will be agreeing recommendations on 29 January 2008
- Business Support Services Review (phase 2) - Cabinet will be agreeing recommendations on 29 January 2008
- Raising Achievement Service Review - Cabinet report being prepared but the date has yet to be agreed.



Have a very merry Christmas  
and a happy new year.