

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee Council

Date of Committee 15 May 2007

Report Title Annual Report of the Cabinet portfolio holder for Children, Young People and Families and the Cabinet portfolio holder for Schools

Summary This joint report summarises the activities of the Cabinet portfolio holders over the last year.

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Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework? No.

Background papers None

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:- Details to be specified

- Other Committees
- Local Member(s) N/A
- Other Elected Members
- Cabinet Member
- Chief Executive
- Legal
- Finance
- Other Chief Officers
- District Councils
- Health Authority
- Police

Other Bodies/Individuals

FINAL DECISION YES

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:

Details to be specified

Further consideration by this Committee

To Council

To Cabinet

To an O & S Committee

To an Area Committee

Further Consultation

Council - 15 May 2007.

**Joint Annual Report of the Cabinet portfolio holders for
Children, Young People and Families and for Schools.**

**Report of the Strategic Director of Performance and
Development**

Recommendation

That the Council receive the joint annual report from Councillors Izzi Seccombe and John Burton.

1.0 Introduction

This is the second meeting at which annual reports from Cabinet portfolio holders will be presented.

2.0 Programme of reporting

The current programme for reporting is set out below for information. It has been designed so that Cabinet portfolio holder reports are presented alongside relevant overview and scrutiny committee.

26 June	Health Cabinet portfolio holder Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
17 July	Adult, Health and Community Cabinet portfolio holder Adult, Health and Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee
11 Sept	Resources and Performance and Development Cabinet portfolio holders Resources, Performance and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
30 October	Economic Development Cabinet portfolio holder Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee

3.0 Recommendation

The Council is invited to receive the joint report from the Cabinet portfolio holder for Children, young People and Families and Cabinet portfolio holder for Schools, as appended.

DAVID CARTER
Strategic Director of
Performance and
Development
Shire Hall
Warwick
30 April 2007

Joint Report of the Children, Young People and Families and Schools Portfolio Holders

Report by Cllr Izzi Seccombe and Cllr John Burton

Recommendation

That Council receives the report.

1. Background

- 1.1 The past 12 months have been exciting and challenging times for both our portfolios. April 2006 saw the creation of the Children, Young People and Families directorate, bringing together officers from all over the Council with different backgrounds into a new team with new ways of working and a new home. The work covered by our portfolios is cross cutting, drawing officers from all directorates, as well as the important contributions of partners in health, police, Learning and Skills Council, Connexions, voluntary and community sector and many, many more. It is however important to reflect upon the remit of the Children, Young People and Families directorate, which now includes: - Education partnership and schools development; young people; family and community; resources; children in need and commissioning, partnerships and planning.
- 1.2 We would like to take this opportunity to thank officers across the authority that have ably assisted us throughout the year, to our many partners who have helped us in our aim to make every child in Warwickshire really matter and Councillor Peter Fowler for the work that he undertook as Family portfolio holder. We would also like to congratulate the Children, Young People and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee on their achievements and forward-looking approach to engaging with young people.
- 1.3 It must be stressed that this report is not an exhaustive list of our work to date or aspirations for the future, but instead aims to present a flavour of our work in order to stimulate debate.

2. Key achievements from the past year

2.1 Context

Warwickshire is home to approximately 124,000 children and young people aged 0-18, who make up roughly a quarter of the County's population. The work of both portfolios focuses on making sure that every child in Warwickshire really matters. Our drivers for change come from responding to national priorities and local needs to create a coherent service, whilst recognising our financial constraints. This section therefore sets out the key achievements and challenges that our portfolios have faced over the past 12 months.

2.2 Partnership Approach

It is increasingly apparent that we cannot work in isolation to provide the many services needed by young people in Warwickshire. Much work has been undertaken in conjunction with partners in preparation for the creation of the Local Area Agreement, which was officially adopted this April. The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board has been refreshed to incorporate a forum (a bigger advisory group) as well as the executive. The Children and Young People's plan, approved by Council in May 2006, is a joint agency plan which sets out how we will meet the needs of children in Warwickshire. It sets out a framework of agreed outcomes against which we can improve services and opportunities for all children and young people in Warwickshire. This has been accompanied by the development of a planning and performance portal that will enable all relevant partners involved to jointly improve services.

2.3 Be healthy

2.3.1 There is a wealth of activity underway to ensure that Warwickshire children and young people are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy.

2.3.2 Over 80% of schools in Warwickshire are engaged with the healthy schools programme. This covers the health and well-being of pupils through a physical and emotional environment that promotes healthy lifestyles, physical activity, emotional health and healthy eating. Alongside this there has been an increasing national focus on what our children eat, triggered by the 'Jamie Oliver effect'. Long before this, schemes were in place across Warwickshire schools to ensure that lunch menus were balanced. Developments at the national level have however, impacted on Warwickshire and there has been a substantial reduction in demand for schools meals in secondary schools, resulting in the catering service facing a trading deficit. This trend has not been mirrored in primary schools, where work on healthy school meals has resulted in a 30% increase in up take between September and

December 2006. An officer steering group, as well as a scrutiny review by members considering the review of demand of schools meals, are under way.

2.3.3 In November 2006, the Cabinet received a progress report on phase 2 of the children centres. This last year has seen the development of 13 children centres out of a total 22 projects that will be implemented by March 2008. Combined with phase 1 of the scheme the projects will reach more than 21,000 children across the County and provide activities for the whole local community but especially for parents and children.

2.3.4 The inclusion of £300,000 in the budget for the roll out of enhanced support networks across the County and £100,000 for the development of the integrated disability service will be key areas of work for the directorate to pursue this year, building on their achievements to date. The need for integrated disability services emerged from the 2002 Best Value Review of services for disabled children. Key messages from the review highlighted the problems arising from the volume of assessments disabled children and their families face and the need for co-ordinated assessment cross agency. The integrated disability service scheme has been highly successful and this year we will see the co-location of professional workers in this important area. This will further speed up assessments and make the process easier for service users. We will also be introducing key workers for families. Last September saw the introduction of a pilot area in Rugby for enhanced support networks. It provides a service of joint professionals working together with families to identify young children who are in danger of exclusions. By joining together the professional workers we can resolve the problems of families, by working with key workers and doing joint assessments and delivery services at an early stage. The budget contribution will enable us to expand this service to Nuneaton and there is an LAA target that 100% of Warwickshire has access to an Enhanced Support Network and lead professional by 2009/10.

2.4 Stay safe

2.4.1 We are delighted that the profile of corporate parenting within the Council has grown this year, culminating in the adoption of the Corporate Parenting Strategy in December 2006. All members will recall the moving presentations that Council have received from looked after young people. The implementation of this plan will be one of the key areas of work facing us in the coming year.

2.4.2 The inspections of Warwickshire's Foster and Adoption services took place in November 2006. During the week, the three inspectors visited a number of foster carers and adopters, met with children in placements, held meetings with a range of social work staff and managers, observed the work of the adoption panel and attended

foster care training and other events involving children in care. They also 'case tracked' a number of children which involved an in depth review of case records and decision making processes. The final reports have only been recently received and were very positive. They found that Fostering Services provide safe and appropriate care for children and have been assessed as excellent. Over the next year attention will be given to supporting the education of children in foster care and ensuring access to the full range of support services available. The inspection confirmed that the Adoption Service was good at identifying children who would benefit from adoption. It will be reviewing its arrangements with other teams and services so that children and families can receive timely help and assistance.

2.4.3 The Warwickshire Safeguarding Board was launched in 2005 and replaced the Area Child Protection Committees. These are now multi agency, and have a remit for all authorities and agencies to consider child protection. A recently published I&DeA report, *How does Every Child Matter to your Council?*, identifies Warwickshire safeguarding children board as an example of best practice, and an I&DeA spokesperson identified that "The Warwickshire initiative demonstrates how local councils spotted the need for a service, and acted effectively to meet it. There are plenty of good examples across the country of novel ways to help children and families, but we saw this as one of the 11 best examples for this publication. Other councils will no doubt be following the Warwickshire lead."

2.4.4 Bullying remains one of the key concerns identified by young people nationally. All schools are now required to have a bullying policy and we have introduced a bullying policy that schools can adopt or use as a template. There are a number of different approaches to bullying in schools which are supported by the Learning and Behaviour Support Services (LABSS), Educational Psychology Service (EPS) and the Education Social Work Service. Research has shown that just tackling the bully about his or her behaviour is unlikely to be effective on its own and a system of support for the victim, the bully and the other pupils is essential to minimise the incidence of bullying in the future. The work of the Intercultural Curriculum Support Service (ICSS) is also very important in this area, empowering all children to treat each other with respect and recognise that bullying is unacceptable.

2.5 Enjoy and achieve

2.5.1 There continues to be a steady improvement in educational attainment targets, but there remains no room for complacency. All of our performance indicators are above the national average. However, we are more ambitious than this and for us the key figures are our comparisons with our statistical neighbours. Our indicators, measured by almost every indicator are at least as good as, and in many cases better, than the average of our statistical neighbours. We now strive to be 'best in class' of those statistical neighbours. Our real focus for the

future is our performance at KS4, where performance is not as we would expect.

- 2.5.2 Many of Warwickshire's schools have received exceptionally good Ofsted reports, but we need to close the gap between schools in Warwickshire by raising the standards of all. In September 2005, there were nine schools in Ofsted categories - two secondary and seven primary. In September 2006 there were ten schools in Ofsted categories, two secondary and eight primary. Six of these were in special measures and four in serious weakness or notice to improve. In April 2007 there were nine schools in Ofsted categories. Three schools have remained in an Ofsted category of concern throughout this period but all are now improving and it is anticipated they will soon be removed from a category. For example, Hartshill School was said to have made "outstanding" progress in the last HMI monitoring visit. Queen Elizabeth School and Ash Green school have both been removed from categories of concern and it is therefore likely that by the autumn there will be no Warwickshire secondary school in an Ofsted category of concern. During the spring term 2007 four primary schools were taken out of categories of concern, these were Abbey Infant, Chilvers Coton Infant, Shipston primary and Whitnash Primary.
- 2.5.3 There has been an overall reduction of schools in special measures from six to four during this period. More schools nationally are now being given a "notice to improve" and in Warwickshire three schools have received this judgement since September 2006.
- 2.5.4 Schools in Ofsted categories are improving in almost all cases and Ofsted monitoring visits report they have received good support from the Local Authority. Our aim is to have no school in Warwickshire in special measures. The authority has been successful in supporting schools placed in categories of concern, but it is disappointing that schools, particularly primary schools are being placed in categories of concern under the new inspection framework. The introduction of School Improvement Partners will assist our knowledge of schools and support for schools who may fall into difficulties.
- 2.5.5 We have also faced difficult decisions around the future of Bishop Wulstan School. We have understandably had a large number of letters and e-mails from people throughout Warwickshire, to which we are grateful. At the 8th March meeting of Cabinet, after considering responses from stakeholders, we agreed to close the school with effect from the 31st August. This decision has now been referred to the School Organisation Committee, who will meet on the 9th May to discuss this subject. An oral update will be given at the full council meeting.
- 2.5.5 Cabinet have also faced decisions on the structures of schools, including the creation of a 4-11 community primary school, replacing the former infant and junior schools in Rokeby. There continues to be

significant capital investment in schools, in particular the completion of special school reorganisation. The new Avon Valley School building is on track to be ready for the start of the autumn term and we have entered into a partnering charter with the school and others to ensure that a high quality product is ready for autumn in which all the local community can be proud of. It is important that we learn from this experience for the forthcoming North Leamington School build.

2.5.6 We should not forget the wider curriculum and the work of the Arts Zone, the County Music Service and the School Sport Partnership, who have been very successful in supporting schools to offer a wider range of sporting and cultural activities for young people.

2.5.7 We have continued to strengthen links with China. Since 2005 Warwickshire has forged strong links with the city of Shenzhen including a memorandum of understanding. A number of Warwickshire's schools have been working with their Chinese counterparts to share ideas and best practice over the last two years and 3 secondary schools in the County have introduced Mandarin lessons as a result of the initiative, along with some primary schools offering taster courses. The Chinese group are to make another visit in July and add further to the relationship.

2.5.8 Several conferences have taken place in all districts to consider Extended School provision. A special governors forum was held in November to share requirements and concerns. It emerged that many schools already provide extended services by way of out of school clubs, community use of facilities, breakfast clubs and very many other schemes. The Extended Schools provision, led by Carol Bunyard, is already achieving ahead of the 2008 target and has been given the 'green light'. Such is Warwickshire's achievement that Carols has been invited to speak at a national conference. Praise has been given for our "level on support to schools". Our backing will be given to the award of a logo for participating schools.

2.5.9 Statistics for SEN statements are showing marked improvements and end of year figures should see the County moving forward considerably in the national tables.

2.6 Make a positive contribution

2.6.1 Key to the success of the Children and Young Peoples Plan is engagement with young people across the County and how their needs and aspirations are fed back to partners working with children and young people. One such example is the December meeting of Cabinet, when Members of the Youth Parliament gave a presentation on the range of activities they had undertaken this year. Members were also advised of outstanding issues which needed to be addressed, including transport for young people and the use of computers provided by the Council.

2.6.2 October 2006 saw a series of events taking place throughout the County to mark Local Democracy Week. These ranged from a schools debate and question time to political speed dating and were arranged in partnership by the county and districts, with input from the County Youth Panel and members of the Youth Parliament (MYPs). In February 2007, 5000 young people from across Warwickshire elected 4 new MYPs to represent the County. The Youth Parliament aims to give young people a voice and we must harness this tool to good effect. The counties new MYPs are: Matilda Lomas (17), Southam College, Ellen Slack (16) Bluecoat School, Jonathon Cox (17) Warwick School and James Handy (14) Kineton High School.

2.6.3 Positive about Young People aims to prevent dissatisfaction amongst young people in Warwickshire and remedy it where it occurs through a community based multi-agency approach. One such project is the Youth Inclusion Support Panel (YSIP), which seeks to prevent offending and anti-social behaviour by offering support to 'high risk' 5-13 year olds and their families. So far this year YSIP has identified and supported 316 children and their families. On average young people offered an intervention via the YSIP improved their school attendance from 69.25% to 80.76%. Currently there are no 10 or 11 year olds within the court system and only one 12 year old. Over 80% of young people involved with YSIP interventions are assessed as having reduced risk factors in their assessment. 90% of parents interviewed felt their circumstance had improved due to YSIP involvement.

2.6.4 PAYP also work hard to offer a summer and Easter activity programme working mainly in agreed areas of high impact. This year, constructive activities in the holiday periods provided 44,416 contacts with young people and through evaluating 3,501 young people achieved 100% satisfaction this year.

2.6.5 A strategy for the inclusion of pupils with emotional behavioural and social difficulties was approved by Cabinet in December 2006. The implementation and development of this strategy will make a real difference to those children who cannot for whatever reason manage in a standard class environment. This will help to tackle the currently high exclusion rates that Warwickshire has.

2.7 Achieve economic well-being

2.7.1 The percentage of year 11 leavers who continue in learning either at school or college has increased from 78% in 2005 to 80.3% in 2006. Similarly, there are 78% of 17 years olds continuing in learning or college or an apprenticeship – the highest ever figure for 17 years olds in learning for Warwickshire. Unfortunately the percentage of young people aged 16-18 in the NEET category (not in education, employment or training) has increased from 5.6% in November 2004 to

6.7% in 2006. This amounts to 1229 young people. However, with concerted efforts March 2007 figures show a reduction to 6.5%. Analysis of NEET group shows that 37% of them reside Nuneaton and Bedworth alone. Strategic discussions are taking place between the local authority, LSC and Connexions to ensure that additional training provision is provided in the areas of most need, to enable us to guarantee a place in learning for every year 11 leaver by the end of September 2007. Discussion between partners and Jobcentre Plus are also underway to maximise the use of vacancies for all young people age 18. We continue to work well with Connexions and this year we have brought the Connexions service into the young people division and set up a three-year service level agreement.

2.7.2 We do need to continue to build upon our work with partners including FE colleges and local employers to develop the skills of young people in Warwickshire.

3. Partnership working and Portfolio learning activities

3.1 As Schools portfolio holder I am joint Chair of the Governor's Forum, Chair of the Joint Negotiating Panel, as well as being a member of the School Organisation Committee, Truancy Panel, Sure Start and Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education. Throughout the year I have visited numerous schools and colleges throughout the County and met and talked to young people and teachers. I have also attended the north of England education conference in Preston, providing the opportunity to share best practice with other authorities, as well as the DfES conference on school funding.

3.2 As Children, Young People and Families lead member, I am Chair of the Children's Strategic Partnership Executive Board (LAA CYPF block), a member of the Governor's Forum and Healthy Schools Partnership, and represent the County on Coventry and Warwickshire Connexions Strategic Partnership Board and the Safeguarding Children Board. I have visited numerous schools and met with MYPs and the County Youth Forum. I also visit the adoption and fostering panels as an observer to keep abreast of their work. It is important to learn from the work of other local authorities and as such I attend a number of I&DeA and LGA lead member conferences and seminars, along with regular regional meetings. I am also a member of the Police Authority, and member of the violence reduction committee, working on domestic violence with a focus on children and young people, on which I expand upon later in the report.

4. Challenges, issues and ambitions

4.1 Consultation with Warwickshire citizens through the Public satisfaction survey shows that the general satisfaction level for Education Services had improved from 46.8% in 2003 to 50% in 2004 and dropped slightly in 2005 to 49%. Amongst service users of the services the satisfaction

level was considerably higher at 78%. Education was a top priority for Warwickshire public, when asked which three areas were most important to them. Quality secondary schools and quality primary schools that promote high levels of achievement in all areas are considered top 2 priorities under area of learning. For the first time, 'Level of crime' has not been selected as the top priority for improvement; instead 34% of residents identified activities for teenagers as a priority for improvement in their area.

- 4.2 Children and Young People's Services face a number of key inspections in the near future. The Annual Performance Assessment (APA- which will feed into the CPA) will take place this July with the Joint Area Review (JAR) in July 2008. As members we need to be aware and prepared for these inspections and be prepared to act upon the outcomes. We will also continue to work with partners in the LAA block 1 to meet the block outcomes. Addressing inequalities in the County is a major theme of the Children's and Young People LAA block and of the 20 block outcomes, at least 5 make explicit reference to narrowing the gap.
- 4.3 Alongside meeting the developing needs of local service users, we must also continue to implement and meet nationally set targets and priorities. The department for Education and Skills and the Treasury have published a report reviewing children and young people policy, *Aiming High for Children: Supporting Families*, which will take forward reform of children services over the next Comprehensive Spending Review period. The first in a series of reports focuses on a more preventative system, doing more to build children's resilience and intervening as soon as possible when problems arise. The report also draws attention to the importance of positive parenting and includes proposals to improve information available to parents and increase the number of free child care places to assist parents to go back to work. The remaining sub-reviews focusing on disabled people and youth services will report in late spring.
- 4.4 The chancellor's 2007 budget resulted in a rise in education spending in England of 2.5% a year in real terms, this will not address the demands upon non-schools budgets, which we hope will be addressed in the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review. The coming months will see the Children and Families services and non-schools education undergoing a value for money review, to review the current costs of these services and bring forward proposals to reduce these costs through efficiency savings and disinvestments. This will be a challenging time for all members and will present difficult decisions.
- 4.5 Home to school transport has been an issue that many members have been involved with last year, through the work of the task and finish groups, and continues to be of concern to many young people, especially those living in rural areas. Consultation draft guidance on home to schools travel and transport published by the DfES earlier this

year places a greater level of duty on local authorities to promote sustainable travel and proposes changes to who is eligible free home to school transport. This in turn will impact upon Warwickshire and our approach to access to transport for young people in general. We hope to build on our consultation with young people to see how best to meet these challenges.

- 4.6 Members of the Youth Parliament continue to campaign for sex and relationships education (SRE) to become a compulsory part of the national curriculum with a focus on relationships rather than just sex. We must listen to young people and wherever possible work with them. The teenage pregnancy partnership oversees the implementation of the 10 year strategy that aims to reduce the rate of teenage conceptions by 50% by 2010 and encourage and support young parents into education, employment or training with a focus on empowering young people to make informed choices about their sexual health. A great achievement for Warwickshire has been the successful implementation of a comprehensive SRE policy and training programme that has now trained over 300 professionals to ensure young people receive age appropriate information and support including signposting to sexual health services. Many professionals can now also distribute condoms to young people under Warwickshire's Condom Distribution Protocol. Future work includes offering support to young people to 'delay' early sex and raise their self-esteem and support to parents with the new 'What should we tell the children about relationships and sex' programme.
- 4.7 The impact of domestic violence upon Warwickshire families is an area that we must address this year. We must work with colleagues in Community Protection and police to tackle this problem that currently sees just under 6000 children and young people being directly affected by domestic violence in Warwickshire.
- 4.8 The coming year will also see much happening to implement the 'Youth Offer' so that all young people in Warwickshire can access 'somewhere to go, something to do and someone to listen to', so that young people in Warwickshire are given the confidence and skills to make informed decisions on matters affecting their lives and can take responsibility for their lives and the actions they take in making decisions.
- 4.9 New legislation will come into effect on 1 April 2008, which requires safeguarding children board and thus the local authority to review all child deaths that occur within the County to see if any lessons can be learnt. Officers are currently in discussions with Coventry and Solihull safeguarding boards to see if a common scheme can be developed across the authorities.
- 4.10 We must also address the backlog of schools maintenance. Warwickshire is currently due to benefit from the Building Schools for

the Future programme in 2013. The maintenance backlog for schools is estimated to be £103m, of which £77.5m is estimated to be in a poor or bad condition.

- 4.11 July saw the garden parties where thanks and farewells were extended to departing head teachers. Difficulty is being experienced in recruiting replacements, with often very few applicants being attracted. This however does seem to be a national problem, which will need to be addressed.

5. Conclusion

It is evident that the work of the portfolios over the coming year will be varied and challenging and we look forward to continuing to work with officers, partners and scrutiny to ensure that all children and young people in Warwickshire receive the highest standards of services possible.

Councillor Izzi Seccombe	Councillor John Burton
Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Families	Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Schools

April 2007