

11 December 2012		ITEM 7
Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee		
Review of the Disabled Children's Service		
Report of: Clare Moore- Service Manager; Sheila Reynolds- Independent Consultant.		
Wards and communities affected: All.	Key Decision:	
Accountable Head of Service: Barbara Foster, Head of Care and Targeted Outcomes		
Accountable Director: Jo Olsson, Corporate Director, People Services		
This report is Public		
<p>Purpose of Report:</p> <p>This report provides the outcome of the review of Children's Services to disabled children, young people and their families living in Thurrock. It makes recommendations about the future delivery of services.</p>		

1. RECOMMENDATIONS:

1.1 Recommendation 1

1.1.1 To develop a Joint SEN and Disability Strategy Group to provide a governance framework across health, education and social care, together with an associated strategic business plan, which identifies how services to disabled children young people aged 0 -25 years and their families will be transformed and delivered in Thurrock.

1.1.2 Appendix A provides the suggested TOR for a Joint Special Education Needs and Disability Strategy Group (JSDSG).

1.2 Recommendation 2

1.2.1 To transform the way in which statutory social care services to disabled children and families are delivered in the future, by the implementation of an integrated health and social care model of service delivery which has strategic and specific links with the 2 special schools and the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) by March 2013.

1.3 Recommendation 3

1.3.1 To undertake a more detailed analysis of the efficacy of short break services including family support and activity services at the Sunshine Centre.

1.4 Recommendation 4

1.4.1 To plan and prepare to meet the requirements outlined in Special Education Needs and Disability Green paper 2011 – Support and Aspiration: A new approach to SEND March 2014 by working with Education, Social Care and Health agencies to develop a pilot from March 2013.

1.5 Recommendation 5

1.5.1 To develop a Multi-Agency Transition Strategy Group – MATSG, (proposed TOR Appendix B) which draws together the differing strands of transition in operation across the Council and which will report into the JSDSG.

1.6 Recommendation 6

1.6.1 To develop a formal relationship with parents, carers and young people who take into account the need for:

- An independent umbrella body such as the CVS to provide a clear governance framework and support to the development of a Parent/Carer and young person's involvement board.
- The need for funding.
- Incorporation of all existing and future fora in which parent/carers and young people are involved.

1.7 Recommendation 7

1.7.1 To develop a resource and information network across the Council.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

2.1 A review of services for children and young people with disabilities was commissioned in January 2012 to:

- a) Look at services provided to disabled children, young people and their families, to include the social work support, residential services and all short break provision.
- b) Examine the interface between the Council's Children's Services, NHS services and the work of the voluntary and community sector (CVS).

- c) Take into account any future developments regarding the national and local policy changes for children's centres.
 - d) Make recommendations, about how services to children, young people and their families, excluding but taking into account school provision, can be delivered in the future.
 - e) Take into account the provision of special education needs and disability (SEND), NHS service provision and the transition review in Thurrock Council.
 - f) Take into account any decisions regarding the development and implementation of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
 - g) Take into account the development and implementation of Multi-Disciplinary Community Hubs.
- 2.2 The range of social work services delivered by Thurrock Council considered within the scope of the review included:
- a) The Disabled Children Social Work Fieldwork Team.
 - b) Short Break overnight Residential provision (out of authority).
 - c) Community short breaks services.
 - d) Out of borough placements.
 - e) The functioning of the children with disabilities register.
 - f) Transition to adulthood.
 - g) Parent/carer and young people's involvement in Thurrock.

There is a complex legal framework, which is underpinned by the Children Act 1989 and the Children and Young Person's Act 2008, as well as recent regulations including the Breaks for Carers for Disabled Children Regulations 2011. To demonstrate its commitment to meeting duties under the latter, the Council has published a statement for carers, which is now available on the website.

The review includes the requirement announced in March 2011 by the Department for Education (DfE) for each local authority to prepare for all young people with Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) a single assessment and a single plan across education, health and social care (EHC Plan) by September 2014. (SEND Green Paper March 2011)

3. ISSUES AND/OR OPTIONS:

National and Local Context of the Review

- 3.1 The review of services to disabled children was set within a national and local context.
- 3.2 The key national policy drivers underpinning the review included:
- a) Special Educational Needs and Disability Green Paper 2011 – Support and Aspiration: A new approach to SEND.
 - b) Short break guidance and Legislation Transforming Community Services for Children, Young People and Families (Department of Health 2009): emphasis on integration and single point of access for services for children with disability or illness.
 - c) Healthy Lives, Brighter Futures – the Strategy for Children and Young People’s Health (Department for Education [then Department for Children, Schools and Families] and Department of Health, 2009): emphasis on multi-agency working and short breaks for children with disabilities.
 - d) Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC): launched in May 2007. This provided the transformation programme for disabled children's services.
 - e) Revised Operating Framework for NHS in England 208 (Department of Health) and the White Paper; Liberating the NHS July 2008. This signalled substantial changes in future years as to how the NHS will function, with a clear direction to phase out PCT’s and devolve responsibility for commissioning services to GP’s and practice teams working in consortia.
 - f) Better Care: Better Lives – improving outcomes and experiences for children, young people and their families living with life-limiting and life-threatening conditions – Department of Health.
- 3.3 The key local policy drivers underpinning the review include:
- a) Future Delivery of Special Education Needs (SEN) Services in Thurrock Council.
 - b) Short break consultation with parents leading to the publication of the Thurrock Council Short Breaks Statement which is at http://www.thurrock.gov.uk/children/content.php?page=sc_disabled

- c) The establishment of the Shadow Health and Well Being Board agreed by the Director's Board to operational for April 2011.
 - d) The development and implementation of the Early Offer of Help Project across Thurrock by March 2013.
 - e) The initiatives that are being undertaken by the Council in relation to the development of:
 - Locality Children's Centres.
 - Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
 - Locality health clusters.
 - Community hubs – Ockendon Pathfinder Pilot.
- 3.4 Thurrock is a small unitary authority with coterminous social care and education departments, which allows for coordination and joint planning. The size of the authority facilitates easy working together across and between agencies, but limits any spare capacity in terms of staffing and budgetary issues.
- 3.5 The North East London Foundation Trust has the overarching responsibility for the delivery of all health services in Thurrock and whilst not coterminous there are identified officer and designated child development centre services based in Thurrock, which provide good opportunities for co-working and the coordination of services.
- 3.6 There are 2 special schools, Treetops and Beacon Hill Academy, each with an outstanding Ofsted rating. There are excellent relationships between the disabled children's services and each school, which provides a good opportunity for the development and implementation of the single assessment, single plan.
- 3.7 In general there are good working relationships between the disabled children's services, the 2 special schools, health, adult care services and the voluntary sector. The disabled children's social care service manager has developed and maintained this network to facilitate cooperation of staff at the front line.
- 3.8 The outcome of the review is that some changes are required as set out below to ensure that services are delivered to:
- Improve outcomes for disabled children and young people by the delivery of coordinated and integrated services across health, education, social care and the voluntary sector.

- Embed prevention and early intervention by the implementation of the single assessment and single plan.
- Use existing funding and resources more effectively.
- Improve access for families to universal provision.
- Promote choice and independence by increasing the range of short break options.
- Provide improved information about what services are available and how they can be accessed.
- Improve plans to secure transition to adulthood and therefore improve services for children and young people who have special needs.

Progress to date

- 3.8 The development of a clear governance framework, with an agreed reporting structure to the Health and Well Being Board and Clinical Commissioning Group has been established to oversee the work required to achieve the changes.
- 3.9 A multi-agency Joint Special Education Needs & Disability Strategy Group has been established, there is agreed Terms of Reference and involves senior officers from Children's and Adult Social Care, Health, Education and parent participation. This group has met twice and a detailed implementation plan, work streams and associated leads have been agreed in order to achieve the recommendations of the review. The JSDSG has a schedule of regular meetings throughout the next year to ensure the success of the transformation programme.
- 3.10 Each work stream has an agreed lead and in the process of identifying key work stream members and developing a detailed work plan to achieve the required changes. Parents/carers are to be included in each work stream.
- 3.11 A multi-disciplinary workshop was held on 28.09.12. The workshop established the principles of working together across all agencies together with the involvement of parents, carers and young people in order to achieve the recommendations of the review and ensure how services to disabled children, young people aged 0 – 25 years are better coordinated and delivered across education, health, social care and the voluntary sector in Thurrock.
- 3.12 Each work stream lead has a plan of work that will commence in early January with a series of workshops that will provide time bound action plans to ensure that the delivery of the project remains on target.

- 3.13 Each work stream has a Terms of Reference that reflects the membership and specific nature of the work required.
- 3.14 A draft Transition Plan has been developed with the participation of the parent led Thurrock Transition Support Group and young people.

4. CONSULTATION (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 4.1 The recommendations of the review have been presented and approved by:
- People's Service Directorate Management Team
 - LSCB Partnership Executive
- 4.2 A presentation of the findings and recommendations of the review has been made to the Thurrock Children and Young People's Partnership Board.
- 4.3 Appendix C identifies the list of people and agencies consulted throughout the review.

5. IMPACT ON CORPORATE POLICIES, PRIORITIES, PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

- The aims of the Promote and Support Inclusion 'pillar' identified in the Children and Young People's Plan 2012 – 13: Everyone Succeeding will be implemented and delivered.
- Preparation to meet the emerging requirements outlined in the Green Paper 2011 Support and Aspiration: A new approach to SEND identified in the upcoming Children and Families Bill for implementation by September 2014.

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Mike Jones**
Telephone and email: **01375 652772**
mxjones@thurrock.gov.uk

There are no direct financial implications associated with the report at this stage.

6.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell for Fiona Taylor**
Telephone and email: **07971316599**
Lucinda.bell@BDTLegal.gov.uk

There are no legal implications to be made. References to statutory requirements have been incorporated into the body of the report.

6.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Samson DeAlyn**
Telephone and email: **01375 652472**
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A fifth of children in Thurrock are growing up in poverty. The vast majority are under the age of 11 and more than half are under 5. Child poverty in Thurrock is slightly below the national rate, but higher than the average for the East of England. In Thurrock, the areas of the borough which have the highest rates of child poverty in most cases have the lowest educational attainment; more people in poor health or with disabilities.

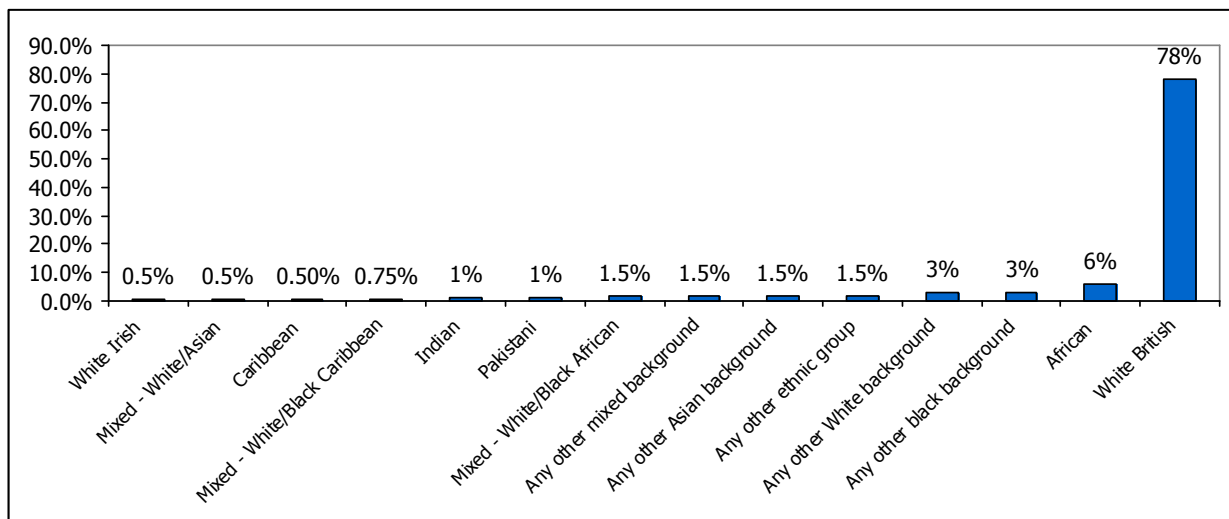
The links between a family where there is a disabled child and child poverty is well researched and evidenced. Official statistics on child poverty from the Household Below Average Income (HBAI) Reports (DWP, 2009) show that children with disabled parents and disabled children are most likely to experience poverty. Research (Monteith and McLaughlin, 2004; McLaughlin and Monteith, 2006) has shown that disabled children and children with disabled parents are more likely to be severely poor while recent research carried out by Monteith et al (2008) has shown they are also more at risk of persistent poverty. For families with both a disabled parent and a disabled child, the situation is much worse.

The table below identifies the ethnic profile of all children on the school census.

Thurrock

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Free School Meals (FSM)	14.1	14.7	15.0	16.1	18.2	17.1
Ethnic Minority (EM)	15.9	18.7	20.8	22.7	24.0	25.7
English as an Additional Language (EAL)	6.3	7.8	9.0	9.9	10.8	11.9
Ethnicity - White British	81.9	78.7	77.0	75.1	73.7	71.8
Ethnicity - White Other	3.2	4.1	4.5	4.8	4.7	5.0
Ethnicity - Black or Black British	7.4	8.5	9.7	10.5	11.3	12.0
Ethnicity - Asian or Asian British	2.4	2.8	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.6
Ethnicity - Mixed/ Dual Background	2.8	3.0	3.3	3.7	4.0	4.3
Ethnicity - Chinese	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.8	1.0
Ethnicity - Other	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6
Ethnicity - Not Obtained	0.4	0.5	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.6
Ethnicity - Refused	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.9	0.9

The table below identifies the ethnic profile of disabled children known to the Disabled Children’s Team which reflects the ethnic profile of the school census profile.



The use of this data and information will be used both for the commissioning of services and in the development of the single assessment, single plan. The use of data can help to ensure all existing and future services are targeted in such a way to provide an equitable delivery of services across the Council.

Disability is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act. The review will identify areas of good practice, areas for improvement and will take into account the proposals in the Green Paper March 2011 – Support and Aspiration: A new approach to Special Educational Needs and Disability. The findings of the review will therefore have an important role to play in terms of meeting the Council's legal duty to promote equality of opportunity.

Currently, life chances for the approximately two million children and young people in England who are identified as having a special educational need (SEN), or who are disabled, are disproportionately poor.

6.4 **Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Section 17, Risk Assessment, Health Impact Assessment, Sustainability, IT, Environmental**

Not applicable.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The Council has a duty to provide services to disabled, children, young people and their families under the legislation laid out in this report.
- 7.2 The review findings identify the current provision of services to disabled children and young people can be better coordinated and delivered to improve efficiency and effectiveness and better value for money.
- 7.3 The recommendations outlined in the review will ensure that the Council will meet the requirements of the development of an integrated service and by September 2014 meet the requirements outlined in the SEND Green Paper 2011 and ensure that services to disabled children, young people and their families are fit for purpose and will meet the requirements of current legislation.

BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT:

- Special Educational Needs and Disability Green Paper 2011 – Support and Aspiration: A new approach to SEND.
- Short break guidance and Legislation Transforming Community Services for Children, Young People and Families (Department of Health 2009): emphasis on integration and single point of access for services for children with disability or illness.
- Healthy Lives, Brighter Futures – the Strategy for Children and Young People's Health (Department for Education [then Department for Children, Schools and Families] and Department of Health, 2009): emphasis on multi-agency working and short breaks for children with disabilities.
- Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC): launched in May 2007 This provided the transformation programme for disabled children's services.

- Revised Operating Framework for NHS in England 208 (Department of Health) and the White Paper; Liberating the NHS July 208. This signalled substantial changes in future years as to how the NHS will function, with a clear direction to phase out PCT's and devolve responsibility for commissioning services to GP's and practice teams working in consortia.
- Better Care: Better Lives – improving outcomes and experiences for children, young people and their families living with life-limiting and life-threatening conditions – Department of Health.
- Future Delivery of Special Education Needs (SEN) Services in Thurrock Council.
- Short break consultation with parents leading to the publication of the Thurrock Council Short Breaks Statement which is at http://www.thurrock.gov.uk/children/content.php?page=sc_disabled
- The establishment of the Shadow Health and Well Being Board agreed by the Director's Board to operational for April 2011.
- The development and implementation of the Early Offer of Help Project across Thurrock by March 2013.
- The development within Thurrock of:
 - Locality Children's Centres.
 - Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
 - Locality health clusters.
 - Community hubs – Ockendon Pathfinder Pilot.

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

- Appendix A - Joint Disability Special Education and Disability Strategy Group (JSDSG)
- Appendix B - Joint Special Education Needs and Disability Transition Strategy Group (JSDTSG)
- Appendix C - List of people and agencies consulted

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