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OVERVIEW OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO

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SUMMARY REPORT

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work undertaken under the Children and Young People Portfolio :-

**Carer's Strategy and Implementation Plan 2013-16 and Young Carers Action Plan 2013-16**

2. We considered and approved the Carers' Strategy and Implementation Plan 2013-16 and the Young Carers' Action Plan 2013-16. Both Plans have been developed by multi-agency Steering Groups including representatives from the Local Authority and Health Partners, carers and voluntary sector organisations. The Plans ensure that the Council meets its statutory duty to identify carers and assess their needs.

**Schools@onedarlington**

3. In December 2012, the Chief Inspector of Schools featured Darlington as a best practice case study in terms of forward thinking local authorities and school standards. His media release aroused a lot of other media interest and people asked us how we had worked with the schools to improve results so dramatically. As a result, and as an outcome of a meeting of all Head Teachers, a consultant from the National College (of School Leadership) and the Virtual Staff College was asked to write up the story by interviewing Head Teachers as well as Councillor Cyndi Hughes and the Director of Services for People. This is very much the Head Teachers' own stories, with my foreword and with contextual sections provided by myself and the Director of Services for People. The booklet has been available from June and printed copies distributed to other authorities and also to key agencies, such as Ofsted and the Department for Education. Head Teachers have used the booklet at a conference on 3 July to propose a business plan for [schools@onedarlington](http://schools@onedarlington) for the academic year 2013/14 which will then be shared more widely.
4. Beaumont Hill Academy was inspected by Ofsted on 1 and 2 May and was rated as Grade 2: Good in every category.
5. Carol Dawson, Head Teacher of George Dent Nursery, will retire in July. The Governing Body of the Nursery School has recently voted to enter into a partnership agreement with Bishopton Redmarshall and Heighington Academy Trust for the provision of Leadership and Management within the Nursery. This agreement is currently being developed and is due to be operational from September.

6. Heathfield Academy was inspected by Ofsted on 13 and 14 February and was rated as Grade 2: Good in every category.
7. In May, the Learning and Skills Service gained an 'Innovation in Access to HE' award for developing an innovative new qualification.

### **Children Looked After**

8. The number of children Looked After by Darlington Borough Council was 199 on 31 May 2013. This figure represents seven fewer children than at 30 April 2013.
9. Ofsted Key Inspections for the 2013 Inspection Year have now commenced in Darlington Borough Council's Children Homes. The first one took place at Gilling Children's Home on 18 April 2013, resulting in a rating of "Good with Outstanding Features".
10. Annual Reports on the services provided within the Children in our Care Service area was presented to Corporate Parenting Panel on 12 June 2013.

### **Child Protection**

11. By the end of March, 60 children were subject to a child protection plan. This shows a significant decrease since December 2012, however the majority of cases are within the neglect category. In the calendar year to March 2013, 58 per cent of all children subject to a plan were 0-5 years.
12. Work is currently being completed to look at the impact of CAF, Family Group Conferencing and other early intervention services in reducing the current numbers of children subject to a plan. Although the current number of children subject to a child protection plan has decreased, the number of children being made subject to a plan overall has been stable when comparing this to numbers from 2011/2012. This year 125 children were made subject to a plan, last year this was 129. With regards to risk factors, domestic abuse, drug use and standard of care have increased, whilst parental alcohol use, ability to parent, and children meeting their development milestones have decreased.
13. From 1 April 2012 until 31 March 2013, 161 children have been removed from plans with 52 children being removed over the last quarter of the year; 42 per cent of these children were no longer at risk of significant harm, 21 per cent were currently in foster care, 9 per cent had moved out of Darlington and 9 per cent were living with other relatives.

### **Children and Young People Collective**

14. The Children and Young People Collective on 10 May 2013. We had a theme to the session that was how Collective members can work together to support children and young people, particularly at the end of year. Collective members heard from Nick Blackburn at Heathfield Primary School about the Emotional Well Being

Centre that is being run there. The Centre is now working with 11 schools with their own model of support for the pupils in their school.

15. The Collective also discussed the work of the Community Safety Partnership about Operation Staysafe, which works with young people engaged in underage drinking, as well as YSkate, an initiative run by the YMCA to set up temporary skate parks. Members also heard from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) about the work they are doing to support the 'Team around the Child' approaches.

### **Teenage Pregnancy and Sexual Health Stakeholder Event 21 May 2013**

16. The Darlington Teenage Pregnancy and Sexual Health steering group held a stakeholder event on 21 May 2013. Key note addresses were delivered by the Director of Public Health, Miriam Davidson. Darlington's Youth MP, Emily O'Hara, spoke about campaigns and launching the Click4Health website. The aim of the event was to engage with stakeholders on the Teenage Pregnancy and Sexual Health delivery plan and develop partnership opportunities. A funding pot was also launched on the day which offers eight groups the opportunity to bid for up to £500 for projects which provide a creative approach to relationships and sex education or contribute to the work of the delivery plan. Sixty six people attended the event from a range of organisations alongside representatives from Darlington and Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form colleges; Hummersknott, Haughton and West Park Academies; Hurworth School and Darlington School of Mathematics and Science. Two teenage mothers, a teenage father and five college students also attended the event and were active participants.
17. Recommendations from the event are currently being implemented and include reviewing access to services and Sex and Relationships education; further engagement with parents and vulnerable groups; developing communications and a possible youth focused stakeholder event in September. A panel will meet in August to review funding applications which are to be announced in September.

### **Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB)**

18. CONTEST is the UK's counter-terrorism strategy that aims to reduce the risk we face from terrorism so that people can go about their lives freely and with confidence (Home Office, 2011). The strategy comprises of 4 strands: Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare.
19. At the LSCB meeting in May, a member of Durham Constabulary's Counter-Terrorism Unit, gave members a presentation regarding Prevent (a similar presentation was given to the Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB)). This raised members awareness of how agencies can work together to protect young people who may be at risk of terrorist radicalisation. It was highlighted that there isn't one general profile that fits those susceptible to radicalisation and practitioners, including those working in schools and education settings, need to be aware of concerns and feedback appropriately.

20. Detailed training for staff on the Prevent agenda has taken place in Darlington; this was delivered and co-ordinated by the LSCB/ SAB Business Unit.

### **Schools Forum**

21. The Darlington Schools Forum is a formal advisory and decision making body for the allocation of funding for schools in Darlington. As Lead Member, I am a non-voting member of this Forum. The Forum's key roles are:
- (a) To be consulted upon changes to the funding formula proposed by the Local Authority;
  - (b) To decide upon the allocation of funding for centrally held budgets; and
  - (c) To give a view upon a number of areas including: contracts for the provision of services to schools; the minimum funding guarantee; financial arrangements for special educational needs; financial arrangements for education out of school; financial arrangements for early years.
22. Areas which have been discussed are budget updates and agreements; early years funding and school transport

### **Corporate Parenting Panel**

23. Corporate Parenting Panel was held on 12 June. The Panel received Annual Reports from the Children in Our Care Services, the Darlo Care Crew and performance information. The Family Placement Service reported a continued increase in recruitment of foster carers and adopters, which improves placement match and also reduces dependence on external providers.
24. The outcomes for young people was also discussed, again a positive picture with the majority finding employment or progressing to further education.

### **Meetings**

25. Since the last meeting of Council, some of the activities I have taken part in include:
- (a) Darlington Partnership Board and Executive meetings;
  - (b) Meeting with HealthWatch;
  - (c) Foster Carer's music event organised with the Sage;
  - (d) Peer Challenge interviews;
  - (e) Meeting with young people from our town twinning visitor groups;
  - (f) The official opening of C: the one stop shop;
  - (g) A regional Catholic Schools Partnership event in Newcastle;
  - (h) Meeting of the Health and Well-Being Board;
  - (i) Clinical Commissioning Group interviews;
  - (j) Briefings with Children's Services officers;
  - (k) Budget Advisory Panels;
  - (l) The Schools Forum;

- (m) The installation event of sculptures designed by young people in Green Park;
- (n) Meeting governors from across the borough;
- (o) Meeting HMI to discuss governance;
- (p) School North East meeting;
- (q) Health and Social Care provider event at the Dolphin Centre; and
- (r) Meeting a representative of 4Motion to endorse an application for their proposed skatepark in Faverdale.

**Councillor Cyndi Hughes**  
**Children and Young People Portfolio**