

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
4 JANUARY 2021**

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**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2017- 2022 – PROGRESS REPORT**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. This report provides an update to the Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny Committee on the progress to date against the delivery of the Children and Young People's Plan 2017-2022.

**Summary**

2. The Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) is one of the identified delivery plans within the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and identifies what key actions will be taken to deliver the agreed SCS priority of the best start in life for every child.

**Recommendation**

- (a) It is recommended that Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny Committee members note the report.

**James Stroyan  
Acting Director of Children and Adults Services**

**Background Papers**

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Christine Shields: Extension 5819

S17 Crime and Disorder	N/A
Health and Well Being	Children's social care is central to well-being
Carbon Impact	There are no implications arising from this report
Diversity	There are no implications arising from this report
Wards Affected	All
Groups Affected	Children and young people
Budget and Policy Framework	N/A
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	Aligned
Efficiency	New ways of delivering support and care of the capacity to generate efficiency
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report impacts on all children and young people including looked after children or care leavers

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

#### Summary

3. The CYPP 2017- 2022 was adopted by Council on 29th September 2017 and since being adopted a professionally designed version of the plan has been produced and published.
4. The Plan covers a period of five years from 2017- 2022, and this report provides an update on progress made to date on delivery of the agreed priority actions.

#### Delivery of the plan

5. The Plan contains the following priority actions for the next five years:
  - (a) Increase breastfeeding rates and reduce the incidence of smoking at the time of delivery.
  - (b) Reduce obesity levels.
  - (c) Improve the mental health and emotional wellbeing of all children and young people.
  - (d) Reduce the number of children and young people living in poverty.
  - (e) Improve school attendance and attainment.
  - (f) Increase the number of young people in work, education or training.
  - (g) Strengthen families to reduce the need for statutory intervention.

6. Chaired by the Assistant Director for Commissioning, Performance and Transformation a multi-agency steering group (MASG) has been established to bring together key partners to ensure effective monitoring and delivery of the Children and Young People's Plan, and to encourage and strengthen links between the Plan and professional bodies. The delivery of the Plan is not just the responsibility of the Local Authority but is a partnership approach, owned by all stakeholders from a range of statutory agencies. This Group currently meets on a quarterly basis.
7. As this is a five-year plan, it was agreed by the Multi Agency Steering Group (MASG) to have a yearly focus on two of the priority actions. During 2019 – 2020, it was agreed to focus on child poverty and improving the mental health and emotional wellbeing of children and young people.
8. The COVID pandemic has had a significant impact come of the children and young people living in Darlington, as outlined in the summary report on the link below.

<https://intranet.darlington.gov.uk/services-search/strategy-policy-and-performance/policies-and-strategies/policy-briefings/>

The MASG have considered the findings of the above report and, for 2021 – 2022, have agreed to continue to focus on child poverty and improving the mental health and emotional wellbeing, but to also focus on youth employment.

## Update on Priorities

### 9. **Priority (c): Improve the mental health and emotional wellbeing of all children and young people**

Within Darlington the Local Transformation Plan Core Group has met to refresh their plan. Several focus areas have been identified based on areas of challenge such as lack of understanding regarding pathways, in which communications can improve this, and also respond to an upcoming report regarding children and young people's mental health written by Healthwatch Darlington.

Darlington is part of the CYP Whole Pathway Commissioning which has health and local authority representatives attending. This work is being refreshed to identify what can be delivered at scale, i.e. across Durham and Tees CCG, and what needs to be delivered at place-based level. Darlington represents a challenge in this area due to its new alignment in the Tees CCG while remaining as part of Durham and Darlington CAMHS. While this is a challenge, it is not insurmountable and the local system being aware of this avoids any risk.

The online counselling and support tool 'Kooth' is currently undergoing a review by TEWV across its full geography. This review is focusing on sign-up, access and outcomes and is expected to be presented to TEWV in early 2021. At the same time CCG commissioners are developing an online counselling and support tool to support teachers, this is from an action as part of the CYP Whole Pathway Commissioning work as a result of the Anna Freud Schools Link Programme and is funded via regional money. At the time of writing this service is out for tender (VEAT) which will close on 27 November and is expected to mobilise quickly. This service is an additional resource in the Durham and Tees area, to the regional telephone psychological

wellbeing support line which is available for all staff Monday-Friday 9am-6pm on 0191 2232030.

Eleven schools continue to joint commission CAMHS wellbeing offer and through a partnership with CCG, LA and schools. Schools have an allocated Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner working into their school for a designated period of time per week. This is transformational in terms of commissioning, and it is felt by all involved that we will be able to better support CYP and measure their outcomes more successfully through this pilot. This work has had some challenges, particularly workforce, which is being addressed. This work is also starting an evaluation process to identify what outcomes have been achieved. This work also supports the Trailblazer work, or Schools based Mental Health Support Teams (MHST) which has now recruited its trainees who are employed by TEWV, and will start university later in November. While at university they have limited clinical hours as part of their training and this work will mobilise over 12months. This work is funded via a successful application to NHSEI and also includes funding for parent/carer support.

#### **10. Priority (d): Reduce the number of children and young people living in poverty**

Significant work has been undertaken over the past 12 months to address child poverty in Darlington, including:

- The council has continued to work with Darlington CAB to deliver:
  - the benefits take up campaign #DarloMillions which maximised residents' incomes by £1.5m in its first year alone
  - the community care grants scheme which includes crisis support payments to households in emergency need of essentials
- The development and implementation of a local wealth procurement framework to address the root causes of child poverty by maximising the impact of the council and other local anchor institutions spend locally, for example by increasing the number of good quality employment opportunities in Darlington
- The implementation of The Bread and Butter initiative in Darlington, which supports households to maximise their income by accessing groceries worth £35 each week for just £7.50, including fresh fruit and vegetables and ambient foods. Approximately 75 tonnes of food, equating to 175,000 meals, have been delivered since the first hub opened in March, and five community hubs have now been established across the borough with this number set to double over the coming months. Ultimately, the scheme will support up to 800 families every week, saving each household nearly £1,500 in food costs every year.
- The In2 project which supports children from Year 6 to Year 8 to engage in a variety of cultural and sports activities, which they might not otherwise be able to access, in order to maximise their potential.
- The School Uniform Exchange has now supported more than 800 households from across the borough with good quality uniform items since it was established in August in response to growing demand. The scheme has recently expanded to include winter clothing items and been awarded further council funding to ensure its sustainability.

COVID-19 has made it harder to deliver some child poverty interventions such as homework clubs and school holiday activity and food programmes due to social distancing restrictions and increased the need for support. Additional work is

therefore now underway to both understand the effects of COVID-19 on child poverty and develop new and innovative ways to tackle it:

- A comprehensive Children and Young People Poverty Needs Assessment, currently in development, to inform the council and partners' approach going forward
- Officers are working to ensure the COVID Winter Grant from government to support families with children to meet essential living costs is distributed effectively and in a way that maximises impact
- The expansion of the Department for Education Holiday Activities and Food Programme to cover all local authorities in 2021 offers a significant opportunity for the council and partners to support disadvantaged children over the school holidays.

## **11. Priority (f): Youth Employment**

A task and finish group has been established and a scoping paper for this work can be found in **Appendix 1** of this report.