



Derby City Council

**CYP Overview and Scrutiny Commission**  
**24 January 2012**

Report of the Strategic Director of Children and  
Young People

# ITEM 6

## **Progress report on: Outcomes of the Children and Young People Commission Topic Review: What is being done by Derby City Council and its Partners to help Children Looked After with mental health issues and can these services be improved?**

### **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report sets out the response to the findings of the Children and Young People Commission topic review conducted during the municipal year 2010-11.
- 1.2 At its meeting on 6 October 2010, the Children and Young People Commission received a detailed presentation about all issues relating to Children Looked After (CLA).
- 1.3 The Commission noted during its discussions with officers in the Children and Young People Directorate that CLA had increasingly high levels of emotional difficulties and complex mental health needs. The Commission therefore decided, for its topic review for 2010-11, to focus on the support provided by Derby City Council and its partners to CLA in order to meet their mental health.
- 1.4 The Commission's review had two central aims:
  - to establish what is currently being done in Derby to support CLA with mental health needs
  - to determine whether provision is adequate or whether measures can be taken to improve services.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 To note the progress in responding to the recommendations arising from the topic review conducted by the Children and Young People Commission, presented to Cabinet on 6 September 2011. [Appendix 3](#)

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 As an outcome of an in depth topic review into the provision of mental health services for CLA an action plan was developed by officers. The action plan set out in Appendix 2 notes the progress made in response to the original recommendations.
- 3.2 As Corporate Parents a number of areas of concern were noted in the lack of, or inconsistencies in, provision of services to CLA which the Council and key partners

are requested to respond to.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 4.1 A team of five elected members of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Commission was established in December 2010. The team reviewed a combination of written evidence and evidence gathered from interviewing witnesses.
- 4.2 Prior to interview, summary statements of the services provided to CLA were considered from Council officers, social workers, and clinical staff from Derbyshire Healthcare Foundation Trust and Royal Derby Hospitals Foundation Trust.
- 4.3 A number of key themes emerged from this process which informed the final conclusions and recommendations. These included:
- the problems with the 'strengths and difficulties' questionnaire used for NI58 and the many variables that could influence the scores was a problem identified by all witnesses
  - the effectiveness of communication between all partners and the willingness of some partners to be inclusive and share information
  - the need for early intervention for CLA with emotional difficulties and mental health needs, in order to stop their problems from escalating, was regarded as essential
  - the need to train foster carers and carers in residential homes to spot problems quickly and have the skills to deal with them appropriately
  - concerns by a number of witnesses about a gap in service provision for children who sexually abuse other children
  - difficulties in finding appropriate residential care for children with severe mental health needs, particularly when the provision at Thorneywood was full, was a key issue to professionals across the field
  - uncertainty about future delivery of Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) in the light of significant changes in the organisation of the PCT
  - the positive steps three service providers had taken to address problems with the referrals to services through the development of the 'Referral Pathway of Therapeutic Services for Children in Care'.
- 4.4 The key themes noted were then drawn together by Members to form 13 conclusions and 13 recommendations to the review. These recommendations have been brought together as an action plan to share with partners and record progress made.

## **OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

5. None

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer

<b>Financial officer</b> <b>Human Resources officer</b> <b>Service Director(s)</b> <b>Other(s)</b>	Rita Silvester, Service Director Commissioning CYPD
<b>For more information contact:</b> <b>Background papers:</b> <b>List of appendices:</b>	Name Rita Silvester 01332 642667 e-mail rita.silvester@derby.gov.uk None Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – Action Plan Appendix 3 – Conclusions and recommendations

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
---------------------

**Financial and Value for Money**

- 1.1 To be identified in the formal response to the review recommendations.
- 1.2 Securing appropriate mental health services may prevent a child requiring support for more expensive and specialist support services.

**Legal**

- 2. To be identified in the formal response to the review recommendations.

**Personnel**

- 3. None.

**Equalities Impact**

- 4. Councillors and officers have an important role as corporate parents. We want to ensure, as any parent would, that children in our care receive the best possible services to meet their individual needs.

**Health and Safety**

- 5. Timely early intervention and appropriate mental health services for CLA can support positive outcomes for the child or young person.

**Environmental Sustainability**

- 6. N/A

**Asset Management**

- 7.

**Risk Management**

- 8.

**Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

9. The report recommendations support the corporate objective of:
- Good health and well-being.