

NORTH YORKSHIRE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD

19th JANUARY 2009

AIMING HIGH FOR DISABLED CHILDREN – SHORT BREAK

PATHFINDER – PROGRESS REPORT

1.0 Key Points

- 1.1 The report updates the Board on key activities in respect of the Short Break Pathfinder.
- 1.2 It details progress on the Pathfinder in line with the Project Plan submitted to DCSF in April 2008 and sets out areas for further development in the next two years.
- 1.3 The Short Break Pathfinder provides us with capacity to develop our LDD Strategy with Disabled Children in key areas:
 - Prevention; developing a range and diversity of provision
 - Integration; collaboration around the needs of Disabled Children
 - Local Provision; services to meet assessed need in Localities

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Board is asked to support the work already carried out and to endorse the proposed future developments in line with the Project Plan.

3.0 Pathfinder Project Plan

3.1 Management Capacity and Leadership

The Project Board has met twice since the last Strategic Partnership Board. We hope to have 20% parental representation by March 2009.

3.2 TDC, the National Support Agency, has observed that North Yorkshire's Pathfinder is not resourced appropriately in its infrastructure to deliver the scale of change anticipated by the Programme.

3.3 Following consultation with the support agency, it is recommended that a Project Leader is appointed to carry out the day to day tasks associated with the Pathfinder. Few people exist across the PCT and Local Authority who could harness the cross agency agenda and the link to Integrated Services.

3.4 It is proposed that one of the Disabled Children's Service Managers in Children's Social Care is asked to become Project Leader, responsible to the Board and the Local Authority and PCT Leads. This post holder could be backfilled using the Aiming High grant and a contribution from the PCT. The PCT supports this approach.

3.5 Additional capacity is required to set up the database systems and to administer the collection of data on increases in short breaks for disabled children and their families. The Performance and Outcomes Team in the CYPS Directorate has assisted in the design of a spreadsheet but administrative time will be needed to populate the workbooks. Resources within administrative teams are being sought to help with this task. The grant can be used to pay for this.

3.6 Contract Care

Contracts are about to be issued to 5 providers to be deliver Contract Care with effect from 1 January 2009. A budget is in place to fund 8 Contract Carers with capital for the adaptation of up to 5 carers' homes to meet complex need. The first placements will be made in January 2009.

3.7 Residential Provision

Four Children's Resource Centre workers have been recruited to boost the numbers of residential short breaks in the CRCs. This should also improve matching of children to available resources. Improvements to equipment and resources available to young people in the CRCs will be achieved by the purchase

of new play equipment and development and training for residential staff.

- 3.8 Negotiations with hospices have commenced to consider the procurement of overnight or outreach services for the most frail or complex young people known to CSC and Health.

3.9 **Improved Commissioning**

One of the strengths of the North Yorkshire Pathfinder bid was the level of quality needs analysis available to CYPS and Health. As a consequence a number of services can now be commissioned using an agreed specification to meet the needs of severely disabled young people. Work with colleagues in the PCT and CYPS Contracting Unit has led to excellent packages of Continuing Care and to the commissioning of new specialist services.

3.10 **Local Commissioning/Integrated Services**

Three areas have been identified as pilot areas to consider the commissioning of short breaks for severely disabled children not known to CSC. A meeting was held in October to explore this which offered some promising ways forward. Further work is needed with Integrated Service leads in Harrogate, Ryedale and Selby to ensure that Short Breaks funding is targeted at those most in need and not used to fund children who should in any case benefit from mainstream services. These meetings will take place early in the New Year.

- 3.11 It will be necessary to develop an appropriate infrastructure to ensure that LDD Short Breaks can be planned and managed appropriately within the Integrated Service structure. This is fundamental to the wider LDD Strategy, of which the Aiming High Project is a part.

- 3.12 The delay in deploying the £25,000 allocated to each of the pilot areas is a financial risk if under spent and contingencies have been discussed to ensure the grant is utilised locally.

3.13 **Outdoor Education Service**

A Project Manager is now in post and there are exciting plans to develop East Barmby to enable severely disabled young people to access outdoor activities. A small capital investment will be needed and specialist equipment procured but this is progressing well and taster sessions for visually impaired young people are already planned for February half term.

3.14 **The Capital Plan**

£250,000 is earmarked for adaptations to Contract Carers' homes.

£250,000 is set aside for improvements to The Ghyll and Nidderdale CRCs.

£250,000 is allocated for the development of a resource to develop residential short breaks for severely autistic children who reside in the Harrogate/Knaresborough area. Initially this was to develop Beckholme, a Family Centre in Starbeck but concerns have been expressed about the location of this unit, it's appropriateness for the purpose and the long term plan for the local special school. More work is, therefore, needed on this aspect of the plan and one other option has been put to us from a local charity who could lease us a facility in the community and offer us more options while we take a longer term view of our needs in this area.

4.0 Parent and Young People's Involvement

- 4.1 Improvements have been made in this area since the last Strategic Partnership Board. A questionnaire was sent to parents of 1050 disabled young people whose needs meet the 'severely disabled' criteria agreed at the September Strategic Partnership Board. 258 responses have been received to help inform the development of short breaks across a range of ages and needs.
- 4.2 From the questionnaire we have parents who have said they are interested in being representatives on a forum. It is proposed that one parent of a child with ASC/ASD and challenging behaviour, one parent of a child with complex care needs and one of a child with sensory impairment be invited to join the Short Break Pathfinder Board by March 2009.
- 4.3 A group of young former service users have been meeting since August to discuss short breaks, to devise tools to gain the views of short breaks service users and other disabled young people and to design publicity material. The **Flying High to See the Way** group has now met 6 times and has been to 5 School Councils to talk about short breaks and to gain young people's views about what opportunities they would like to enjoy. This has been an excellent piece of work and has gained national recognition.

5.0 Eligibility Criteria

- 5.1 The revised criteria employed in Children's Social Care have now been road tested and are being used as a guide to inform the deployment of increased resources available to existing

users in Children's Social Care. Families are reporting real increases in their service offer and it is making a difference to their lives having a greater number of breaks.

- 5.2 Nationally, a good deal of work is going on in Pathfinder to revise Children's Social Care criteria and to develop the Common Assessment Framework to deploy short breaks where the full Framework of Need Assessment is not appropriate. In some areas lead professionals have become fund holders in order to secure breaks for disabled children and their families. The Project Board will be considering what would be involved in developing this option in North Yorkshire, and whether it is likely to be feasible during the life of the Project.

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Project Lead

18th December 2008