

Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board

Report title	A shared vision/plan for all children and young people in Gloucestershire
Item for decision or information?	Information and Decision
Sponsor	Chris Spencer, Director of Children's Services Dame Janet Trotter, Child Friendly Gloucestershire
Author	Andy Dempsey, Director of Partnerships and Strategy Dame Janet Trotter, Child Friendly Gloucestershire
Organisation	Gloucestershire County Council Children's Services
Key Issues:	
1.0	<p>The Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board (GHWB) had been due to meet on Tuesday 17 March 2020. However, in light of the COVID-19 emergency and direct involvement of board members in the response, the decision was made to cancel the meeting. Included on the agenda was an update report on the work underway to develop of a shared vision/plan for all children and young people in Gloucestershire. The report asked the GHWB to 'approve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The draft document attached at Appendix 1 as the basis for a wider consultative exercise to commence later this month. • A further report, accompanied by a draft strategic vision and action plan, to be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board'.
2.0	<p>The GHWB had been clear in its support of this important area of work in previous meetings. It was therefore agreed with the Vice Chair of the GHWB and Director of Public Health (Lead Officer), that the GHWB would be asked to consider this matter 'virtually' in order that work was not delayed by the current emergency. An email was sent to all GHWB members (16 March 2020) asking for approval as required by the report.</p>
3.0	<p>In response to the email, GHWB members indicated their approval for the recommendations in the report. The purpose of this report is to update HWB members on the progress to date with consultation activity and seek some guidance on next steps in light of the immediate and longer-term impacts of Covid-19.</p>
4.0	<p>Following on from the HWB meeting in March, a consultation exercise with young people was commenced based on the priorities and commitments set out in the draft Strategic Vision (Appendix 1). The GHWB and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner jointly oversee the work of the Child Friendly Project Group. It was, therefore, necessary to receive agreement from the GHWB for the consultation exercise to go ahead. A summary report setting out the key findings from the consultation exercise is attached at Appendix 2.</p>
5.0	<p>The consultation has generated over 600 responses from young people across the county and an 8yrs to 25yrs age range. The majority of the responses have come from 11-13 year olds (45%), with more girls (76%) responding than boys. The biggest proportion of responses came from Gloucester (56%) whilst Tewkesbury has sent the lowest (3%). The priority that most resonated with the young people who completed the survey was 'You will get a good education and be given the skills you need for modern life'. The issues that most concerned respondents were personal</p>

safety and fairness and equality. Within the free text sections of the questionnaire, mental health and equal access emerged as key themes. Overall, the consultation exercise has highlighted that the priorities within the draft document considered by GHWB in March resonate with the experiences and concerns of young people.

6.0 Alongside the consultation with young people, Dame Janet Trotter and Andy Dempsey, Director of Partnerships: Children's Services, are meeting with the District Councils during July to seek their views around the priorities and explore the support they can provide towards meeting those commitments. This will extend, over time, to engage with wider range of key stakeholders and partners in the county with an enduring involvement in the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in the county.

7.0 Covid-19, which could be argued to be the greatest challenge to face the United Kingdom since the second world war, has had a significant and unprecedented impact on services for, and the situation of, children and young people in Gloucestershire. Many children have been without education and early years provision since March and those in receipt of specialist services have experienced a range of approaches towards the continuation of provision during this period. Activity that had previously involved a face to face, personalised service has, in some instances transferred to digital platforms, in order to sustain some level of engagement during the lockdown period.

8.0 Nationally, and as a county, we are in the early stages of the transition from the immediate crisis response, which aimed to mitigate the health impact of Covid 19 whilst simultaneously sustaining services for the most vulnerable, towards the longer-term restoration and transformation of services and the wider community. Whilst it is too early to determine the longer-term impact of Covid 19, we can anticipate a number of challenges and opportunities in the short to medium term:

- The pandemic will have an effect on all current county strategies and plans - as the county revises its strategies, the Child Friendly Project will necessarily need to flex its strategy.
- Inequalities have been magnified by the pandemic rather than lessened. It has been highlighted nationally that the pandemic has differentially impacted on households in poverty and individuals from BAME communities.
- Many children who were already behind in their personal, educational and social development will have been doubly disadvantaged by their experiences over the past few months.
- Collaborative arrangements that have developed across agencies and sectors in order to support and engage children and families during the crisis phase provide the potential for innovation and integration, potentially becoming part of a new 'business as usual'

9.0 In developing the draft document considered by GHWB in March, considerable care was taken to ensure it supported and aligned with the strategic vision for the county set out in Leadership Gloucestershire's Vision 2050 document. It follows, therefore, that any changes to the 2050 Vision that may be deemed necessary to respond to the challenges of Covid 19 will need to be reflected within our aspiration to create a 'child friendly county' through a shared strategic vision for children and young people. Whilst initial consultation with young people suggests the priorities are broadly

correct these were developed prior to Covid 19 and based on a set of assumptions that may no longer apply. On that basis, it was felt prudent to explore with GHWB how the project should now progress as the multi-agency approach towards recovery for the county as a whole begins to coalesce.

10.0 It is our contention that the GHWB cannot afford to delay the development work to set the future direction of our shared vision for children and young people at this crucial time of recovery from the pandemic. To address this, we are requesting that GHWB gives its support to a continuation of its work over the summer and to come back to the October HWB meeting with specific areas of work to be addressed within the action plan.

11.0 The totality of work necessary to realise the collective aspiration of a child friendly county will be significant and prolonged. The aim of our work over the coming months will be to identify areas where intervention will be most beneficial in securing the long-term prospects of children and young people, aligning this with the emerging thinking across agencies around recovery. This will necessarily be multi-agency and collaborative in character: both voluntary and statutory organisations will need to be involved together with the voice and contributions of children, young people and parents. Some specific areas of work such as the Safer Gloucestershire strand, developed in collaboration with the Gloucester Constabulary, and linking with the county's Climate Change Group can also progress in order to respond to some of the immediate concerns of young people.

Recommendations to the Board:

1.0 The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to note the report and:

- support the continuation of work over the summer period in order to develop areas of work where intervention and support will have a lasting impact; and,
- continue to engage key partners and stakeholder in order to build support and gain their insights

Financial/Resource Implications:

There are no direct financial implications from this report.