

Notice of a Meeting

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee Thursday, 5 November 2009 at 10.00 am County Hall

Membership

Chairman - Councillor Ann Bonner
Deputy Chairman – Councillor Neil Owen

<i>Councillors:</i>	M. Altaf-Khan Marilyn Badcock Roger Belson	Anda Fitzgerald- O'Connor Janet Godden Pete Handley	Tony Harbour Dave Sexon Val Smith
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<i>Co-optees:</i>	Mr Chris Bevan	Mrs Sue Matthew	Mrs Galina Kildyusho va
	1 Vacancy		

Notes: *Members are asked to note that there will not be a pre-meet for this meeting.*

Date of next meeting: 8 December 2009

What does this Committee review or scrutinise?

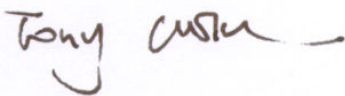
- Services for children, young people and families; preventative services; child protection; family support, educational policy; youth service; youth justice;
- Primary & secondary schools; special education; pupil services; school transport; music service

How can I have my say?

We welcome the views of the community on any issues in relation to the responsibilities of this Committee. Members of the public may ask to speak on any item on the agenda or may suggest matters which they would like the Committee to look at. **Requests to speak must be submitted to the Committee Officer below no later than 9 am on the working day before the date of the meeting.**

For more information about this Committee please contact:

Chairman	-	Councillor Ann Bonner E.Mail: ann.bonner@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Committee Officer	-	Julie Dean, Tel: (01865) 815322 julie.dean@oxfordshire.gov.uk



Tony Cloke
Assistant Head of Legal & Democratic Services

27 October 2009

About the County Council

The Oxfordshire County Council is made up of 74 councillors who are democratically elected every four years. The Council provides a range of services to Oxfordshire's 630,000 residents. These include:

schools	social & health care	libraries and museums
the fire service	roads	trading standards
land use	transport planning	waste management

Each year the Council manages £0.9 billion of public money in providing these services. Most decisions are taken by a Cabinet of 9 Councillors, which makes decisions about service priorities and spending. Some decisions will now be delegated to individual members of the Cabinet.

About Scrutiny

Scrutiny is about:

- Providing a challenge to the Cabinet
- Examining how well the Cabinet and the Authority are performing
- Influencing the Cabinet on decisions that affect local people
- Helping the Cabinet to develop Council policies
- Representing the community in Council decision making
- Promoting joined up working across the authority's work and with partners

Scrutiny is NOT about:

- Making day to day service decisions
- Investigating individual complaints.

What does this Committee do?

The Committee meets up to 6 times a year or more. It develops a work programme, which lists the issues it plans to investigate. These investigations can include whole committee investigations undertaken during the meeting, or reviews by a panel of members doing research and talking to lots of people outside of the meeting. Once an investigation is completed the Committee provides its advice to the Cabinet, the full Council or other scrutiny committees. Meetings are open to the public and all reports are available to the public unless exempt or confidential, when the items would be considered in closed session

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, giving as much notice as possible before the meeting

A hearing loop is available at County Hall.

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments**
- 2. Declarations of Interest - see guidance note on the back page**
- 3. Minutes (Pages 1 - 22)**

To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 22 September 2009 (**CH3(a)**) and 5 October (**CH3(b)**) and to note for information any matters arising on them.

- 4. Speaking to or petitioning the Committee**

BUSINESS PLANNING

To consider future work items for the Committee

- 5. Scrutiny Work Programme 2009/10 - Children's Services (Pages 23 - 24)**

10.15 am

To discuss operational matters with regard to the Committee's Work Plan. A matrix is attached at **CH5**.

- 6. Learning & Skills Council Dissolution and Law Change - Presentation**

10.25 am

This item is one of the three principle topics earmarked at the last meeting for review, the others being 'Bullying in Schools' and 'Science in Schools and the Community'. Plans are underway for presentations to be given at the 23 February meeting on the latter two topics.

A presentation will be made by Sandra Higgs, Strategy Leader, 14 – 19 Oxfordshire after which there will be a question & answer session. A brief which has been prepared by the officers will follow.

SCRUTINY MATTERS

To consider matters where the Committee can provide a challenge to the work of the Authority

- 7. Draft Oxfordshire Children & Young People's Plan 2010-13 (Pages 25 - 56)**

11.10 am

This is an opportunity for the Committee to feed any advice/comment to Cabinet in relation to the draft Plan , prior to its submission for approval to the 15 December Cabinet.

The draft Plan can be found at **CH7**.

REVIEW WORK

To take evidence, receive progress updates and consider tracking reports

8. Monitoring - Young Carer's Scrutiny Review (Pages 57 - 126)

11.45 pm

The purpose of this agenda item is to evaluate, 12 months on from the Cabinet's consideration of the review, what progress has been made in implementing the recommendations that were agreed. The review was undertaken by Councillors Anda Fitzgerald O'Connor, Carol Viney and David Turner, together with Ben Jackson, a former co-optee of the Committee.

Councillor David Turner, as lead member, has been tracking the review and he has been invited to attend.

Councillors Michael Waine and Louise Chapman have also been invited to attend to respond to any questions members of the Committee might have with regard to the tracking report, together with Children, Young People & Families officers Deborah Parkhouse and Hannah Farncombe.

Copies of the full review is attached at **CH8(a)**, the Executive Summary at **CH8(b)** and the tracking report at **CH8(c)**.

9. Educational Attainment Scrutiny Review - update

12.15 pm

An update will be given by the members of the Working Group.

10. Teenage Conception Review - update

12.20 pm

An update will be given by members of the Working Group.

11. Close of Meeting

Declarations of Interest

This note briefly summarises the position on interests which you must declare at the meeting. Please refer to the Members' Code of Conduct in Section DD of the Constitution for a fuller description.

The duty to declare ...

You must always declare any "personal interest" in a matter under consideration, ie where the matter affects (either positively or negatively):

- (i) any of the financial and other interests which you are required to notify for inclusion in the statutory Register of Members' Interests; or
- (ii) your own well-being or financial position or that of any member of your family or any person with whom you have a close association more than it would affect other people in the County.

Whose interests are included ...

"Member of your family" in (ii) above includes spouses and partners and other relatives' spouses and partners, and extends to the employment and investment interests of relatives and friends and their involvement in other bodies of various descriptions. For a full list of what "relative" covers, please see the Code of Conduct.

When and what to declare ...

The best time to make any declaration is under the agenda item "Declarations of Interest". Under the Code you must declare not later than at the start of the item concerned or (if different) as soon as the interest "becomes apparent".

In making a declaration you must state the nature of the interest.

Taking part if you have an interest ...

Having made a declaration you may still take part in the debate and vote on the matter unless your personal interest is also a "prejudicial" interest.

"Prejudicial" interests ...

A prejudicial interest is one which a member of the public knowing the relevant facts would think so significant as to be likely to affect your judgment of the public interest.

What to do if your interest is prejudicial ...

If you have a prejudicial interest in any matter under consideration, you may remain in the room but only for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the matter under consideration, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise.

Exceptions ...

There are a few circumstances where you may regard yourself as not having a prejudicial interest or may participate even though you may have one. These, together with other rules about participation in the case of a prejudicial interest, are set out in paragraphs 10 – 12 of the Code.

Seeking Advice ...

It is your responsibility to decide whether any of these provisions apply to you in particular circumstances, but you may wish to seek the advice of the Monitoring Officer before the meeting.

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 22 September 2009 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 12.10 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Ann Bonner – in the Chair
Councillor Neil Owen (Deputy Chairman)
Councillor M. Altaf-Khan
Councillor Marilyn Badcock
Councillor Roger Belson
Councillor Melinda Tilley (In place of Councillor Mrs
Anda Fitzgerald-O'Connor)
Councillor Janet Godden
Councillor Steve Hayward (In place of Councillor Tony
Harbour)
Councillor Val Smith
Councillor Lawrie Stratford (in place of Councillor Dave
Sexon)
Mr Chris Bevan
Dr Hajjat Ramzy
Mrs Sue Matthew

Officers:

Whole of meeting: J. Dean and L. Michelson (Corporate Core)

Part of Meeting: J. Tomlinson and Tan Lea (Children, Young People &
Families) (Agenda Item 5);
Councillor Louise Chapman and Councillor Michael
Waine (Agenda Items 5 and 6)

The Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting, together with a schedule of addenda tabled at the meeting, and decided as set out below. Except insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda, reports and schedule, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.

25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

(Agenda No. 1)

Apologies for absence and temporary appointments were received as follows:

Apology From	Temporary Appointments
Councillor Anda Fitzgerald-O'Connor	Councillor Melinda Tilley
Councillor Pete Handley	-
Councillor Tony Harbour	Councillor Steve Hayward
Councillor Dave Sexon	Councillor Lawrie Stratford

26 MINUTES

(Agenda No. 3)

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 14 July were approved and signed.

There were no Matters Arising.

27 OXFORDSHIRE YOUTH SERVICES

(Agenda No. 5)

Ofsted had carried out a visit to Oxfordshire on 23 – 25 June 2009 to evaluate the impact of integrated youth support, as part of their 2009/10 inspection programme. The Committee had before them a copy of the letter sent by Ofsted to accompany the published report giving a summary of the report's outcomes. It had scored the service as follows:

- The impact of integrated arrangements on the range and quality of young people's learning and development through participation in youth work and positive activities in the community is good;
- The effectiveness of targeted support services, particularly in relation to young people involved in, or at risk of involvement in, crime and social behaviour is good;
- The progress made by the local authority and its partners in developing an integrated approach to youth support is satisfactory;
- Young people's active involvement in shaping decisions at a local level is good;
- The contribution of integrated support arrangements to broader strategic priorities for improving outcomes for young people is satisfactory.

Areas for improvement included the need to:

- Develop a service-wide quality assurance framework which included feedback from young people;
- Ensure targeted youth support played a central role in strategies to reduce teenage conceptions and increased the number of young people in education, training or employment;

- Provide opportunities for staff to share good practice and contribute to service planning;
- Develop and implement a workforce strategy.

Tan Lea, Head of Oxfordshire Youth Service, the Director of Children, Young People & Families and Councillor Chapman were present at the meeting in order to respond to any questions from the Committee. Tan Lea gave a presentation on the report and its outcomes commenting that it had been a very positive message to staff, partners and volunteers. She added, however, that the Directorate was not complacent and there was a clear strategy in place to address the development plan.

The Committee then asked a number of questions of Tan Lea and Councillor Chapman, some of which are included below:

Q With regard to the recent Mentoring Service consultation document which was circulated recently, is it the aim to reduce this service?

R (Tan Lea) We are looking at a service restructure to ensure that it is more integrated and could be accessed by most clients in need. The consultation document looks at how the services are managed, how the volunteers are used and how the number of volunteers can be expanded. It is proposed that there will be a single point of referral and a reduction in waiting lists, which will produce a more realistic period of receipt. An outcome of this will be that the savings will be re-invested in the Youth Services in line with the other targets identified – in particular with weekend opening. We have also looked at other models of good practice in terms of efficiency and delivery and have tried to apply them.

Q Thank you for the inspirational report. How will the service manifest itself into a good service for young people?

R (Cllr Chapman) in the form of week-end opening. Tan Lea has been the inspiration behind these proposals, having driven much of the work herself.

Q Feedback on the consultation on Youth Mentoring has shown that that some of the workforce are insecure and have concerns. What are your views on this?

R (Cllr Chapman) The staff are concerned about the proposal to re-invest in the service and to utilise more voluntary support. Some of the permanent posts will be affected by this. We are hoping to redeploy those affected back into the wider Youth Service. The consultation has only just finished.

Q Is it exceptional support? Will young people who want to set up their own groups be assisted by the service?

R (Tan Lea) Within the universal provision portfolio we have tried to think through how we can give the widest possible access to support. In the rural districts we work with the parish councils taking an advisory role and offering support and infrastructural support. This will not be a 'one off' support.

Cllr Chapman added that application by voluntary organisations could be made via the 'Chill Out' fund to open a youth group.

(Tan Lea) With regard to our work with schools, the pattern is mixed. Whilst there are excellent examples of this, we need to get back on track ensuring that children and young people can remain on school premises using the facilities, whilst accessing the Youth Service. This has been partly applied already in relation to the work underway with vulnerable children.

Q Are you in a position at present to disseminate good practice – or is this work in progress?

R (Tan Lea) You are right to point this out. I do not currently meet with school Governing Bodies. Your point reinforces the need for the service to take a more systematic relationship with schools.

Q Can religious organisations apply for the Chill Out fund?

R (Cllr Chapman) The 'Chill Out' fund helps many church groups. Ethnicity is not an issue. Another pot is that of the Youth Opportunities Fund where young people can put in bids themselves. Our service would help them to put the bids together, if requested.

Q On the access to public transport in rural areas question, do you continue to pursue discussion with local transport companies?

R (Tan Lea) Attention is being given to this issue. Young people held a conference day last year focussing on transport issues, to which they invited the major bus companies and officers. This is one achievable area that could be taken forward with the possibility of trying to attract external funding. There are plans in place to have another day this year to review progress and to determine the next steps. It is a difficult area to progress.

(Cllr Chapman) The Youth Parliament are putting together a paper with the relevant Transport Cabinet Member. It will ask for concessionary fares for young people. Cllr Chapman invited members of the Committee to come along to a meeting of the Parliament.

We are looking to providing increased access to primary health services and Health Visitor staff in some of the urban youth centres. In addition we shall be helping to increase access to Health provision, working with early intervention teams specialising in drug and substance abuse.

The Director for Children Young People & Families paid tribute to the leadership which Tan Lea had exercised throughout a period of significant change. She added that her work was exceptional when viewed in the context of a national picture that found it unusual for a Youth Service to attain a 'good' status.

Members of the Committee thanked Tan Lea for her attendance and congratulated her for her excellent leadership through a period of significant

change. They also congratulated her on the very pleasing outcome of the Ofsted inspection.

Councillor Chapman undertook to circulate the meeting dates for the Youth Parliament to enable members to attend if they so wished.

The officers also undertook, at the request of the Committee, to extend an invitation to the Youth Parliament and 'Sounding Board' to come along to a future meeting to make presentations on their work.

28 REDUCING TEENAGE CONCEPTIONS WORKING GROUP - UPDATE

(Agenda No. 6)

The Committee received an update on the activity of the Reducing Teenage Conceptions Working Group.

The Committee **AGREED** to note the report.

29 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT TASK GROUP

(Agenda No. 7)

The Committee noted that the Educational Attainment Task Group were due to meet with Sally Taylor, Head of Raising Achievement, Northern Area, on 30 September.

The Committee had been advised that, under the Constitution, scrutiny task groups should, wherever possible, reflect the political balance of the Council.

It was **AGREED** to note the report and to add Councillor Ann Bonner and Councillor David Nimmo-Smith to the membership of the Task Group.

30 PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME

(Agenda No. 8)

The Committee considered a report (CH8) which briefly set out the Committee's existing commitments and proposals for future work which had been identified at the last meeting during discussion.

Existing commitments comprised two working groups on the following:

- Reducing Teenage Conceptions in Oxfordshire (joint review with the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee);
- To review further work on Educational Attainment.

At the last meeting, the Committee had identified a significant number of proposals for future work. Since then, the officers had prepared proposal forms and these were attached to the Agenda for information. Of these, there were three suggestions that stood out for their relevance to current County

Council priorities. In light of this, the Committee were **RECOMMENDED** to hold select committees on the following:

- 'Young people's transition into employment' – with the possibility of combining this with 'Dissolution of the Learning & Skills Council';
- 'Links between Oxfordshire Schools and the Science Community'; and
- 'Anti-Bullying'.

The Committee were further **RECOMMENDED** to decide whether it wished to prioritise the remaining nine ideas, initially for a question and answer session.

Following a full discussion when each suggestion had been taken in turn, the Committee **AGREED** that the following topics be included within the Work Programme for 2009/10 and that they be prioritised at the next meeting:

- 'Dissolution of the Learning & Skills Council, Transitioning Young People into Employment, Reducing NEETS;
- Linking the Science Community to Oxfordshire Schools;
- Anti-Bullying.

Thereafter a matrix be submitted to each meeting, summarising the progression of all projects.

In relation to those topics which were not identified for the Work Programme, it was **AGREED** that briefings be given on the following topics in the first instance to enable decision:

- Permanent Exclusions;
- The outcomes of the SACRE review on religious education in schools;
- The impact on school enrolment of the rising influx of children from the independent sector into state schools and what steps the Council were taking to address it;
- Progress of the Children's Centres programme.

With regard to the Children's Trust, the Committee decided to await its formation into strategic commissioning status in March 2010 and to undertake work at that time around this new focus and whether it is equipped to be effective in its new role.

In relation to the invitation to join Oxford City Council's scrutiny review on the City's youth services, it was **AGREED** to thank the City Council for their invitation, but to inform them that in light of the favourable outcomes of the Ofsted inspection, as highlighted in Agenda Item 5, not to give this a priority at the moment.

31 FORWARD PLAN
(Agenda No.)

The Committee were asked to suggest items from the current Forward Plan on which it may have wished to have an opportunity to offer advice to the Cabinet before any decision was taken, together with details of which it thought could be achieved by looking at any items.

No items were identified.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing 2009

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Monday, 5 October 2009 commencing at 3.00 pm and finishing at 5.30 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Ann Bonner – in the Chair
Councillor Liz Brighthouse OBE
Councillor Neil Owen (Deputy Chairman)
Councillor Marilyn Badcock
Councillor Roger Belson
Councillor Mrs Anda Fitzgerald-O'Connor
Councillor Jean Fooks
Councillor Janet Godden
Councillor Tim Hallchurch MBE
Councillor Don Seale
Councillor Dave Sexon
Mr Chris Bevan
Mrs Sue Matthew

Officers:

Whole of meeting: J. Dean and L. Michelson (Corporate Core); Jim Crook and Roy Leach (Children, Young People & Families); Councillor Michael Waine, Cabinet Member for Schools Improvement.

Part of meeting: N. Graham (Corporate Core)

The Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting, together with a schedule of addenda tabled at the meeting, and decided as set out below. Except insofar as otherwise specified, the reasons for the decisions are contained in the agenda, reports and schedule, copies of which are attached to the signed Minutes.

32 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

(Agenda No. 1)

Apologies for absence and temporary appointments were received as follows:

Apology from	Temporary Appointments
Cllr Val Smith	Cllr Liz Brighthouse OBE
Cllr Tony Harbour	Cllr Timothy Hallchurch MBE
Cllr Pete Handley	Cllr Don Seale
Cllr Altaf -Khan	Cllr Jean Fooks

33 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - SEE GUIDANCE NOTE

(Agenda No. 2)

Councillor Fooks declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 4 on the grounds that she was currently Acting Chair of Iffley Meads School's Governing Body.

34 SPEAKING TO OR PETITIONING THE COMMITTEE

(Agenda No. 3)

The Chairman agreed to 10 requests to address the meeting from the following members of the public and local members:

Councillor Larry Sanders	-	Local Member
Jane Gallagher	-	Local Resident and parent
Bill McKeith	-	Executive Officer of the Oxford & District Trades Union Council
Andy Davice	-	Local resident and parent
Jeremy Spafford	-	Parent
Tony Brett	-	Local resident and parent
Anna Thorne	-	Parent
Catherine Goodwin	-	Parent
Ian Bellchambers	-	Local resident and local resident
Cllr Nuala Young	-	Oxford City Council

The principle points raised by each speaker are briefly summarised as follows:

Councillor Larry Sanders

Spoke in support of reason 3 of the call-in ie. that 'any feasibility study should include looking at other options, not just the academy', raising the following points:

- The academy was the only option available – Expression of Interest (EoI) was effectively sponsored by ULT. Other options such as that of

the Co-Operative Trust, which had been heavily 'flagged' to the Government, had not been considered;

- Two of the fifteen academies sponsored by ULT had been named by Ofsted as a failing school;
- If the ULT option was successful then all secondary schools in the catchment area would be of a religious nature. It was unfair to parents not to offer them the choice;
- Any consultation which had been undertaken to date had not proved to be very helpful. It was unfortunate that there were proposals already underway to move certain schools on to the Oxford School site, which appeared to have been put in place without discussion with parents and the community.

Jane Gallagher

- As a local resident living in the catchment area for Oxford School and a parent of two children, one of whom was a pupil of Larkrise Primary, Ms Gallagher was alarmed to hear of the decision by Cabinet to conduct a feasibility study on ULT as sponsor;
- She stressed the importance to her family of having the choice of a secular school within the area;
- She expressed her concern that the parents of children directly affected by the Council's plans had yet to be consulted. Any consultation should precede a written proposal;
- She urged the Council to withdraw the decision to proceed with the feasibility study until all the options had been considered and discussed with parents and the community;
- Ms Gallagher requested that all of her views expressed above be framed in the light of Oxford School's 'excellent' GCSE results.

Bill MacKeith

- Mr MacKeith explained that the Oxford & District Trade Unions Council was an important representative body which had a remit to represent the interests of trade union members and of the wider community;
- Speaking in support of reason 3, he urged the Committee to advise the Cabinet to continue with the status quo, which was an alternative that had not been considered, on the grounds that Oxford School was a good school, with improved GCSE results and which provided parents with a secular choice. He added that the Council was denying the democratic rights of the parents and the staff to proceed with little consultation and to take away the choice of a local secular school.
- He stated that only one of the schools managed by ULT was performing above the national average and alleged that 17% were poor performers;
- Mr MacKeith urged the Committee to advise the Cabinet not to give away a publicly owned community school to an 'undemocratic private Trust', nor should they sell off public land;

- He concluded by urging the Committee to refer the Cabinet's decisions back for further consideration and to let Oxford School continue.

Andy Davice

- Mr Davice stated that, as a parent of two young children living in the catchment area, he strongly agreed with reason 1, that there had been a lack of consultation with parents, the community and local members;
- He had been concerned to hear it stated (from an unconfirmed source), that the current headteacher of Oxford school was employed by ULT. In his view, if this were to be correct, then a consultation process would be both expensive and superfluous as the decision will have already been made;
- He also highlighted the impact on surrounding schools within the area of having an academy school with no (alleged) responsibility to take statemented children on their roll;
- Mr Davice also highlighted the issue of reduced parental choice, should parents want a non-faith school for their children.

Jeremy Spafford

- As a parent of a child who was attending the school and another who had attended the School, both of whom were happy and excelling, it was Mr Spafford's view that the feasibility study should not have been given the go-ahead to proceed on the basis that it was a failing school. It was his view that it was not a failing school;
- He added that as a parent he had not been either informed or consulted and nor had the teachers. This had led to both feeling confused, upset and undermined by the process. He felt that this was very damaging to the pupils of the school;
- He urged the Committee to recommend Cabinet to consider other options. Whilst he accepted that there were problems which needed addressing, he thought it unjust that the School should be tarred with an adverse reputation, thus making it difficult for the school to attract pupils. There was a need for the Council to promote the School as a good place to go;
- He concluded by warning that it may well be a good option to extend the School to a 3 – 19 age range, but by introducing this, beautiful school grounds could be lost.

Tony Brett

- As a consultation officer for all the schools within the area, and as a neighbourhood action worker, Mr Brett told the Committee that, to date, the community had not been engaged in consultation on the Eol;
- He added that if the proposal to become an academy went ahead, then there would be wide-ranging effects on the infrastructure, including pressure on local roads and the loss of a key cycle lane;

- Without proper engagement, he alleged that the public might believe that the proposal was an attempt by the Council to sell more land for housing purposes;
- He asked why there had been no consultation with other faiths about plans to have a Church of England school, particularly representatives of the Muslim faith;
- Mr Brett concluded that, given allegations that the EoI had been signed off by the Council before the Governing Body of Oxford School had met, it gave the impression that the Council was rushing through the proposal.

Anna Thorne

- Called upon the Cabinet to put more resources into looking at more options;
- She added her concern that many of the parents and members of staff already thought that the proposal to change the School to an academy had already been decided, with a start date of 2012. This would have a very damaging impact on school numbers;
- She concluded that Oxford School was a 'wonderful' school and action was needed to allay confusion in the local press.

Catherine Goodwin

- Catherine Goodwin related her address to that of reason 3. As a parent of primary aged children, living in the catchment area, she pointed out that parents at Oxford School were under the impression that Oxford School would become an academy in 2010;
- She was of the view that the Council would not undertake to conduct a feasibility study unless there was good reason to. However, in her view, it did not appear worth doing so, or indeed desirable, in light of the lack of choice in relation to a faith and also in light of the fact that Oxford School's results had improved greatly;
- She added that in her view, it appeared that staff turnover was high in ULT managed schools.
- In addition, she believed that the MP for the local area was not in favour of an academy, saying that it could not be perceived as viable when one applied any kind of democratic measure to the feasibility study. She added that if parents did not feel that they were being consulted, then that was, in itself, a problem. The Council should be making it a virtue in getting the parents involved.

Ian Bellchambers

- Ian Bellchamber was a parent of two children in year 7 of Oxford School. He spoke in relation to reasons 1 and 3;
- It was his view that, for the proposal to have credibility, then other available options should be looked into, including that of the status quo. Not to do so decried the achievements of the teachers and pupils at Oxford School.

- A secular option would be acceptable and welcoming to all;
- He was of the opinion that other options, such as a Co-operative Trust or federation with a partnership school, should be considered. Not to consider such options represented a denial of parental choice;
- In light of the above, Mr Bellchambers urged the Committee to advise the Cabinet against proceeding with the feasibility study.

Councillor Nuala Young

- In relation to reason 1, Councillor Young commented that the only favourable message which had come out of a lack of consultation with the community was that the parents had now become informed about the situation and were now galvanised into action;
- She informed the Committee that, as a Governor of Oxford School, she had been sent a questionnaire which asked her to express an interest in various options;
- Following the questionnaire exercise, a resolution had been put, and at that point passed that there should be an expression of interest into the possibility of establishing an academy. The problem was that time should then have been devoted to looking at the other options available. The Governors who were present expressed a readiness to do so;
- She had great hopes for the future success of Oxford School. It had achieved much given the numbers of problem pupils and asylum seekers it had attracted. The School's twinning activities with a school in Gloucester had also benefitted the school.
- She concluded by urging the Committee to advise the Cabinet not to conduct a 'token consultation', following the feasibility study, but to look at all alternative options.

35 CALL IN OF A DECISION BY THE CABINET - OXFORD SCHOOL - FEASIBILITY STUDY INTO REPLACING IT WITH AN ACADEMY

(Agenda No. 4)

In accordance with Rule 16 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the Proper Officer had agreed to a request from the following Councillors for a Call In of the Cabinet's decision made on 15 September in relation to 'Oxford School – Feasibility Study into replacing it with an Academy'.

Councillor Mohammed Altaf-Khan
Councillor Alan Armitage
Councillor Jean Fooks
Councillor John Goddard
Councillor Janet Godden
Councillor Jenny Hannaby
Councillor Zoe Patrick
Councillor Larry Sanders
Councillor Ros Smith
Councillor David Turner

The Cabinet decision was to:

- (a) note the content of the Expression of Interest;
- (b) agree to proceed with the 'Feasibility Study'; and
- (c) request officers to bring a further report on the outcomes of consultations undertaken as part of the 'Feasibility Study'.

The reasons given for the request were:

1. Lack of consultation with parents, the community and local members.
2. The Expression of Interest is unclear because it mentions a primary school and a special school being included without identifying them.
3. Any feasibility study should include looking at other options, not just the academy.
4. The impact on the other schools in the area needs to be considered.

The report considered by Cabinet was attached to the Agenda at **CH4**.

The Chairman indicated that she wanted each reason for the request to call-in to be addressed in turn and the business to be conducted as follows:

- a representative from the 10 members who had called the item in to briefly introduce each reason;
- the Cabinet member/officers to respond;
- the Committee to discuss;
- the Cabinet member/officers to respond if it is so wished.

Reason 1 – Lack of consultation with parents, the community and local members

Councillor Godden introduced Reason 1 on behalf of the 10 members pointing out the following:

- The predominant reason was that the Expression of Interest (EoI) had been progressed with much haste, thereby losing the confidence of the parents, who had not been consulted on other options considered up to that point;
- Should the Feasibility Study be proceeded with now, it would not be a productive exercise for the above reason;
- It was important that the parents should feel involved and it was clear from the statements heard from them that they did not; and
- A message should be sent back to Cabinet via this Committee that meetings ought to be held with the parents of pupils at Oxford School and its feeder primary schools prior to proceeding further.

Councillor Waine responded with the following points:

- Oxford School had been designated a 'National Challenge' school by the Government, not by the Council. The Council thus had no alternative but to respond to the designation as soon as possible;
- The Cabinet had to consider a range of options for securing improvements to the School not only to rise above the national targets, but also to reach a sustainable level in the future;
- A range of options had been looked at in some detail with officers and with the Governing Body;
- The Government had pointed the Council to ULT. A government official was present, together with the ULT representative, when the academy option had been explored;
- The Cabinet were not viewing any change made to the School as a 'rescue' option, but as a 'renaissance' option. They wanted parents to select the School as their first choice, the majority of parents did not do so currently; and
- The option for the establishment of an Academy carried with it a consultation process which was government funded and independently led. The Cabinet had underlined that they had deemed the consultation process which related to Peers School to be successful. This process had looked specifically at the major stakeholders and aimed to ensure that they felt they had an influence on the situation. The consultation meetings had been very well attended.

Roy Leach added the following points:

- The same model used for the Drayton School/North Oxford Academy will be used for Oxford School;
- In relation to that model, a number of open meetings had attracted 100 parents. Discussions had also taken place with various interest groups and smaller groups of parents;
- The consultation will be run by an independent consultancy firm;
- Any consultation could not be proceeded with until the appropriate minister had signed off the EoI, thus releasing the funds.

Individual members of the Committee raised the following points in relation to Reason 1:

- Much had happened centrally since the 'National Challenge' initiative, including more interest in co-operative schools and federation;
- Oxford School took in children from across the City;
- Local members and parents should have been made aware of the EoI process;
- Oxford School accepted many children who had been excluded from other schools because it was the only school with free places;

- The East Oxford community was a particularly diverse one and it was very important that the parents and community be consulted;
- The academy route looked to be the best option, but the feasibility study should not be proceeded with yet until the appropriate people had been consulted. People deserved a little more time to be listened to;
- The call-in was premature. The Cabinet were going through all the correct procedures with the EoI and feasibility study. A full public consultation will then ensue in due course;
- If people felt that they had not been consulted or heard, then the points raised by the speakers in this call-in procedure addressed this;
- All the Cabinet papers had been put in the public domain and all members and the public had had the opportunity to look at them;
- All the due processes may have been followed but there had not been sufficient communication. All individuals taking the decisions should take cognisance of the issues the speakers had raised and their need to be communicated with;
- There had been a gap in the process – the Council's Statement of Readiness – Buildings for the Future' had stated that two new schools were expected in 2010.

Councillor Waine responded with the following points:

- The Local Authority had acted in response to National Challenge, which lay down the parameters of the process. The Council had been asked by the Department to look at the academy model as a viable option which would have a potential for success for the community; and they had also pointed to ULT as a potential partner. This had pleased Oxfordshire because this was an opportunity for the Authority to act as co - sponsor, which had not been a available option with Banbury and Peers Schools at the time;
- The EoI could be turned down by the Department. If it was not turned down, the Cabinet was now at the juncture where a detailed and independently-led consultation could be conducted with all stakeholders;
- If the EoI was not turned down, the aim was to have a very full consultation. The Banbury option had been a very much improved form of consultation from that used for Peers School and this would be used. Roy Leach added that it would not be a heavily prescribed consultation process, though the Department would expect the views of the parents to be reflected in it;
- As a result, if Oxford School should close, then the Council would conduct a legally prescribed, detailed consultation. In order to provide linkage, it would make sense to combine consultations;
- The reality was that Oxford School did meet the needs of Oxfordshire's most diverse community, but the schools situated around it were ceasing to support it with the numbers necessary to sustain it. Part of the Council's duty was to ensure that the School was a first choice from parents;

- The North Oxford Academy was a faith-led school, but, last year, was oversubscribed for first choices from a very diverse community. Faith-led schools offered a basic ethos to a school. This assertion was based on the knowledge the Council had about Oxfordshire;
- The rumours circulating that any chosen sponsor would not accept children with special educational needs were untrue;
- 'Building Schools for the Future' stated that there 'could be' two other academies. This Council views the academy model as part of the diversity of schools which the Council could offer in secondary school education.

Reason 2 – The Expression of Interest is unclear because it mentions a primary school and a special school being included without identifying them

Councillor Fooks introduced Reason 2 making the following points on behalf of the ten members:

- There had been significant alarm amongst parents, staff and the community with regard to the possible closure of St Christopher's and, although a letter was received from Janet Tomlinson later, it was felt that no action had been taken up to that point to allay people's fears;
- There had also been much concern expressed about the future of Iffley Mead School, but no discussions had taken place with the School's Governing Body. No schools had been specifically mentioned within the EoI;
- It was premature for the EoI to go ahead in such a vague form;
- Discussion with the appropriate Governing Bodies should have been built in over a number of meeting cycles to ensure adequate time for consideration; and
- She asked that if there was a presumption that primary schools would be situated on the site, would it pre-empt other schools expanding?

Councillor Waine responded making the following points:

- The aim was to have new 3 – 19 provision and not to have specific schools. There was also need for extra provision for primary years within Oxford City;
- With regard to the point made about St Christopher's School, officers had entered into confidential discussions with the Governing Body Chair and the Head Teacher. Letters had been sent to parents explaining the situation. Parents had attended the Cabinet meeting and efforts had been made at all stages to listen. There had been a clear decision not to involve St Christopher's School within any proposals for an Oxford Academy;
- If the School became an Academy, the Council would assign the whole of the school site over for 99 years for use as an Academy – this would reserve the piece of land. Cllr Waine was not aware of any plans to sell any land on the Oxford School site to housing.

Roy Leach commented that;

- the age range of the proposed academy was 3 – 19 years and it had been forecasted that 180 additional reception places were required over a period of 6 years. This would equate to an extra form of entry per year. This would mean identifying other schools in the area for growth. Councillor Waine added that the outcomes of the Primary Review Board recommendations had been a clear commitment to build extra classrooms and expand schools over time;
- The Eol process had been very time limited and, although efforts had been made, it had not been possible to consult with the Chair of Governors and Head Teacher of Iffley Mead School. This was the reason that this School had not been named in the Eol.

Reason 3 – ‘Any feasibility study should include looking at other options, not just the academy.’

Janet Godden introduced Reason 3 and summed up the points in favour on behalf of the other 10 members as follows:

- Reference had been made in the Eol to ‘more radical options’ , but there had been no assurances given that other options had been explored;
- The money which was proposed to be spent on the feasibility study could be spent on years 5 and 6 in feeder primary schools with the aim of achieving higher results.

Members of the Committee expressed a number of views and concerns during debate. These were:

- Concern that the community might not back the scheme when consulted;
- Concern that the community were unaware of any of the other options that had been considered;
- Belief that Oxford School could offer the children living in the community the education they deserved without any upheaval. The School was improving;
- A feasibility study, as an outcome of an Eol, had to be about something specific and therefore had to concern only one option.

Councillor Waine responded as follows:

- Other options had been considered, and it was the view of the local authority and the School’s Governing Body that the academy option was the only viable one with potential for a renaissance for Oxford School;
- There are web sites available that explained the requirements of National Challenge;
- If linkages were to be made with other schools, then those schools would require the school in question to have a very clear track record

with regard to improvement and attainment. This had proved to be a major issue when considering a way forward;

Roy Leach pointed out that the Government funding was exclusive to conducting a feasibility study into the option to create an academy. However, a number of options had been explored in the lead up to the current situation.

A member of the Committee had asked when the other options had been considered. Councillor Waine responded that the options had been referred to in a Cabinet paper and that they had been the subject of a very full and intense discussion. In response to a further question asking on what basis an option relating to the establishment of a Co-operative Trust had not been supported by the local authority, he explained that the Department had ruled that Trusts needed to have an embedded system of school improvement to be considered viable. At the time the Co-operative Trust had only established one Trust and did not therefore had a proven track record.

Reason 4 – ‘The impact on the other schools in the area needs to be considered’

Councillor Fooks introduced reason 4 and summed up by asking how the proposal would affect other schools in the area.

Councillor Waine commented that this proposal was about sustaining a school from within its community and about supporting a school to raise its attainment.

Members of the Committee expressed a number of views and comments during debate. These were:

- The academy option was a firm way forward;
- Oxford School had raised its attainment by 12% in one year. If an academy did not succeed, parents would think very seriously about sending their children to another school within the city.
- Had the Cabinet taken an in depth look at the complex pattern of demographics of the area? Had they looked at how more primary provision would affect neighbourhood schools in the area?
- If there was to be more primary provision, how would this affect neighbourhood schools?;

Carole Thomson advised the Committee as follows:

- She expressed concern that officer time going into other schools might decline during the period of establishment of an academy, particularly as the Council was embarking on making more efficiency savings. Reference had been made to the Council meeting 50% of the costs incurred by the academy. The implications of this should be discussed openly and transparently;

- If parents were to be given the option of sending their children to a non faith school, then they would be entitled to school transport. This would serve to increase the pressures on the budget.

Councillor Waine responded that he had written to Oxford School to congratulate them on their results. However, National Challenge required sustainable results over at least a 3 year period. He added that action needed to be taken to draw the people living in the community. Therefore it had to be viewed as a successful school with a high level of attainment. With regard to the point about more primary provision, and how it would affect neighbourhood primary school provision, he explained that if the academy option were to be adopted, then the local authority, as co-sponsor, would have the ability to declare that there was only the need for 'x' number of places.

Having considered each reason in turn, Councillor Godden was asked to sum up on behalf of those members who had called the item in. She made the following points:

- There had been no opportunity, or indeed, it appeared, no willingness shown to hold discussions with the schools involved and parents affected prior to when the formal consultation process associated with the feasibility process would take place. It was hoped that the Committee would decide to advise the Cabinet to address this;
- The Eol had not been clear (earlier drafts had, in fact, been clearer) about how the 3-19 option would be utilised. Parents were very concerned that it had not been fully discussed within a public forum. It had not been made clear about what had been discussed, by whom, and where the written records were held. There was a requirement for these to be circulated;
- The feeder and other primary schools within the area needed to be consulted with, together with the parents, particularly with those parents who did not want a faith school. ULT as an organisation was very firmly faith based;
- There had been general agreement that Oxford School's results had been remarkably good this year. If there was certainty that ULT could bring about a great improvement, then it was certain that full support from the community would ensue;
- It was concerning to learn that the Co-operative Trust option had not been put forward because the local authority had not supported it; and
- The Cabinet had arrived at a very 'narrow point' with almost nobody being involved in the discussions. There was legitimate community concern about this.

Councillor Waine responded that, similarly at this point, there had been no specific prior discussions with the parents of North Banbury. Consultation came with the feasibility study. He pointed out that the North Oxford Academy had become an over subscribed school with a potential for future excellence.

The Chairman then addressed the Committee stating the following:

‘Having listened to all the evidence today, the questions, the answers and the subsequent discussion, I have heard nothing that leads me to believe that there has been a lack of proper process. I therefore put to a motion to the Committee that:

The decisions made by Cabinet matter be not referred back and that no further action be taken’

Councillor Fooks spoke against the motion stating that ‘a lack of due process’ failed to encapsulate the many reasons put forward at the meeting against what was felt to be a premature decision made by Cabinet to enter into a feasibility study, without due consultation with stakeholders. She felt that the Chairman should take each reason in turn and should take a vote on each separately.

In response to a request made by the Chairman for advice, Nick Graham advised her that the Committee could take a vote on every reason, or she could take the statement ‘lack of due process’ to encapsulate the reasons put forward in total.

The Chairman determined that the motion should stand and it was put to the vote. The motion was carried by 8 votes to 5.

The meeting closed at 5.30pm.

..... in the Chair
Date of signing 2009

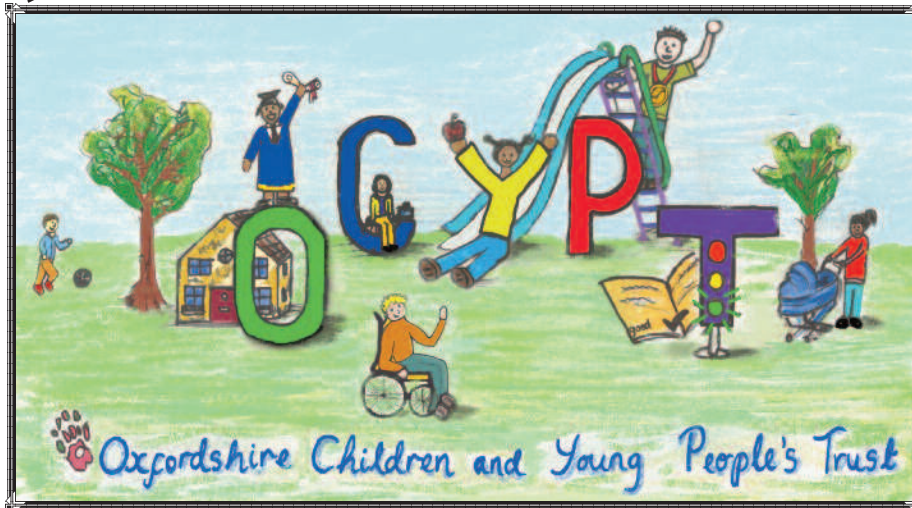
Children's Services Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2009/2010

		Meeting 5 November	Meeting 8 December Budget Discussion		Meeting 23 February			Meeting 25 May
Topic	October	November	December	January	February	March	April	May
Reducing Teenage Conception	Working Group Meeting	Update at the Scrutiny Committee				Review of Progress for Action Plan		
Educational Attainment	Working Group Meeting	Update at the Scrutiny Committee	Schools visits and research				Select Committee	
Dissolution of the Learning and Skills Council, Transitioning Young People into Employment, Reducing NEETS		Briefing and Q&A for the Scrutiny Committee	Prep for the Seminar		Seminar			
Linking the Science Community to Oxfordshire Schools					Briefing and Q&A for the Scrutiny Committee			
Bullying					Briefing and Q&A for the Scrutiny Committee			
Permanent Exclusions								Briefing to the Committee Meeting
The outcomes of the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) review on religious education in schools								Briefing to the Committee Meeting
In relation to the Children's Trust , the Committee decided to await its formation into strategic commissioning status in March 2010 and to undertake scrutiny work at that time around this new focus and whether it is equipped to be effective in its new role.								Briefing to the Committee Meeting
The impact on school enrolment of the rising influx of children from the independent sector into state schools and what steps the Authority is taking to address it;					Written paper from Officers on the current state of enrolment changes.			
Progress of the Children's Centres programme.					Written paper on the Children's Centres programme			

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Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Plan

2010-2013



Design by

a pupil from an Oxfordshire Secondary school

**Draft for Consultation
October 2009**

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1 Introduction

Welcome to Oxfordshire's second Children and Young People's Plan. This is an important document that sets out the ambitions that we, the Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Trust, have for Oxfordshire's children and young people, and the steps that we will be taking to turn these ambitions into a reality.

We want Oxfordshire to be the best place in England for children and young people to grow up, by working with every child and young person to develop the skills, confidence and opportunities they need to achieve their full potential.

Strong foundations have been put in place since our first plan began in 2006, and we are well placed to deliver a step change in outcomes across our three priority areas:

Keeping all children and young people safe

Raising achievement of all children and young people

Narrowing the gap for our most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups

This plan makes all public services involved in children and young people's services in Oxfordshire accountable for achieving these priorities. This is no easy task, but by working together we will rise to the challenge.

It is important to note that this is an improvement plan and, therefore, there are many aspects of the work of all partners which do not feature because they are already delivering good outcomes.

Final Version to be signed by the Children & Young People's Trust members



2 The Oxfordshire Context and Needs Analysis

Oxfordshire 2030, the county's Sustainable Community Strategy, provides the overall strategic direction, long term vision and key priorities for the economic, social and environmental well-being of Oxfordshire. This plan sets out, within the context of Oxfordshire 2030, the strategic direction, priorities and actions that we will take to deliver all services affecting children and young people and their families within Oxfordshire. It is also Oxfordshire's response to national policy, in particular the Department for Children, Schools and Families "Building Brighter Futures" with its vision "to make England the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up in".

This plan has been developed by the Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Trust; a partnership that brings together young people, senior managers, parents and politicians from across the public, private and voluntary sectors in Oxfordshire. Further information on the partnership can be found at Appendix A. All the work that these partners undertake to improve the outcomes for children and young people will align with and flow logically into, and from, this plan (see diagram at Appendix B).

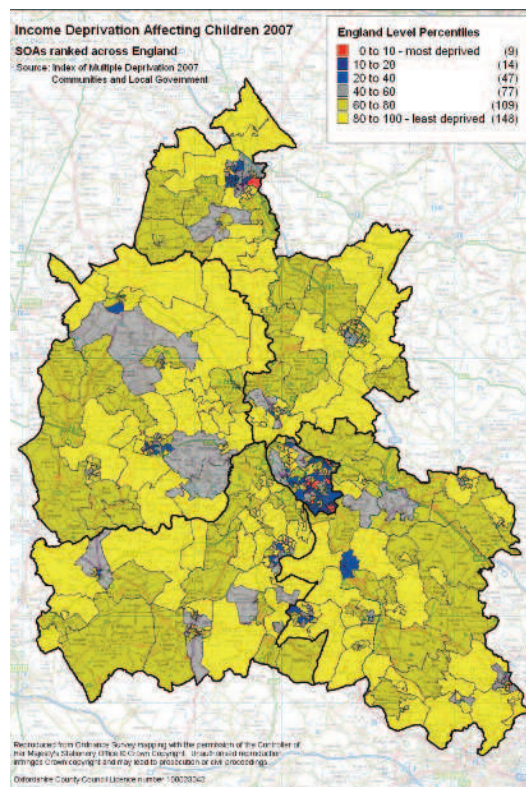
Context

There are 155,700 children and young people aged 0-19 years living in Oxfordshire, out of a total population of 639,800 (mid 2008).

Oxfordshire is a county of contrasts; although it is the most rural county in the South East of England with over 50% of the population living in settlements of fewer than 10,000 people, there are also urban areas, including Oxford and Banbury. Significant growth is planned in the county, with 55,000 new houses to be built between 2006 and 2026, and associated population growth expected.

Oxfordshire is a relatively affluent county and, although the recession has led to unemployment more than doubling in the past year, it remains under 2.5%¹ compared to a national figure of over 4%. Despite the overall affluence of the county, there are several small areas of serious deprivation, where children and young people experience ill health, are less successful at school, are more likely to become involved in or experience crime, may become teenage parents, face higher unemployment, lower earning capacity and, ultimately, an earlier death than their peers. There are nine urban areas across the county which are in the worst 10% of areas in the UK for child poverty and a further 16 wards (out of a total of 136) that are in the top 25%. Additionally there are small pockets of poverty in some of our rural areas which can be masked by the general affluence of the population. Poor transport can compound the problem of deprivation in rural areas, making access to services difficult and contributing to feelings of isolation.

Further information is provided in the map.



¹ Job Seeker Allowance, July 2009



The ethnicity of Oxfordshire's population is undergoing significant change. In particular, there has been large growth in the category 'other white', with an increase of 37% since 2001. Other groups have also significantly increased. Some ethnic minority groups do less well at school than the overall cohort; in particular, we know that children and young people from Black and Bangladeshi/Pakistani groups under-perform at Key Stages 2 and 4.

There is a significant military presence in the county which means some of our children and young people in military families experience turbulent lives and live with anxieties that sometimes impact upon their well being.

While the child wellbeing index (covering health, education, crime, housing, the environment, overall wealth and children in need) for Oxfordshire ranks the county as 18th best out of 149 councils and three of the district councils have high rankings, the other two districts are ranked much lower - Cherwell is 140th out of 354 and Oxford city is 259th out of 354.

Needs Analysis Summary

Be Healthy

- The health of the population in Oxfordshire, including children and young people, is generally better than average for England and the South East region. However, more than 13,000 children and young people are living in poverty. We know that they will face significant inequalities that are likely to impact on their health;
- Under 18 conceptions are generally low, however, compared with the South East and similar areas in England the rate has increased. There are particular concentrations in parts of Banbury and Oxford city;
- Teenage parents are more likely to leave school as soon as possible, and approximately 80% are not in employment, education or training;
- By the time that children reach year 6, 15% are obese, compared to 7% in reception (2008-09);
- Breastfeeding and immunisation rates are high compared to the national picture, but there are significant variations between areas within the county.



Stay Safe

- 427 children and young people are currently looked after by Oxfordshire County Council (August 2009), the majority of these are accommodated with foster carers. 11% of this group are unaccompanied asylum seekers. Placement stability has improved consistently over the past three years, from 15% of looked after children in 2006-07 to 9% in 2008-09;
- It is estimated that there are 11,000 young carers in Oxfordshire;
- 1,411 children or young people were admitted to hospital due to injury in Oxfordshire in 2008-09 (106.5 per 10,000 population aged under 18).



Enjoy and Achieve

- Generally Oxfordshire's children and young people achieve better than the national average, but do not do as well as their peers in similar areas of the country. Particular groups under-achieve e.g. looked after children at Key Stage 4, Black and Bangladeshi/Pakistani pupils at Key Stages 2 and 4, and young people in receipt of free school meals;
- 91 schools were inspected by Ofsted in 2008-09. 12% were rated as 'outstanding' (9% in 2007-08). 59% were rated as good or better (67% in 2007-08). 4% were rated as inadequate (6% in 2007-08);
- 88% of children and young people in Oxfordshire aged 4-19 play outside at home, 87% do 'sporty things' outside school/college, and 70% go to local sports/leisure centres (Children and Young People's Survey, July 2009). Some groups of vulnerable/ marginalised children and young people are much less likely to play out, go to parks/ clubs and see friends, e.g. disabled children and young people, those living in temporary accommodation and teen parents.

Making a positive contribution

- Young people have told us that bullying is an issue, in particular, among vulnerable groups and among the older age range within secondary schools;
- Generally, rates of crime involving children and young people are low and falling. In 2007-08 the total number of offences was 2,002, which was an 18% reduction on the previous year. However, there are hot spots of youth crime;
- Since April 2008 there has been a gradual increase in custodial sentences for young people within Oxfordshire;
- Oxfordshire is one of the best performing areas in the country in terms of reducing re-offending. The rates are in the top 20% nationally, at 35%;
- On the whole, exclusion rates are low compared to national figures, however, there are some worrying trends, including the number of children and young people with special educational needs being permanently excluded.

Achieve Economic Well-Being

- The percentage of young people achieving level 2 and 3 qualifications is too low and below other areas, although there has been some recent improvement;
- The gap in attainment in level 3 at age 19 between those young people who had school meals at age 15 and those who did not is greater than similar areas and the national figure;
- The percentage of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) is growing.

More detail of the needs of children and young people can be found in the supporting Needs Analysis.



Oxfordshire's three priorities

The three priorities for Oxfordshire's Children and Young Peoples Trust from 2010 to 2013 are:

Keeping all children and young people safe

Raising achievement for all children and young people

Narrowing the gap for our most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups

These priorities have been selected following our comprehensive needs analysis and take account of:



The views of children and young people, parents and carers from ongoing consultation and participation work;

The views of the professionals from many different organisations who work with children and young people in the county, including the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB);

What recent inspections of our services have said about us;

Performance data and statistics, which tell us how children and young people in Oxfordshire are doing.



3 Long term vision

“ By 2030 we want Oxfordshire to be recognised for its economic success, outstanding environment and quality of life; to be a place where everyone can realise their potential prosperity and where people are actively involved in their local communities. ”

Oxfordshire 2030 Sustainable Community Strategy

Our children and young people are key to ensuring that we are able to realise this vision. This means working collaboratively to ensure that all children and young people in Oxfordshire:

- Enjoy good physical and mental health;
- Are protected from harm and neglect;
- Break free from the cycle of deprivation;
- Enjoy educational success;
- Grow up able to look after themselves with high aspiration and expectation of themselves; and
- Make a positive contribution to the local community.

4 Underpinning Principles

Partnership working is already well established in Oxfordshire. All partners working with children, young people and their families have a shared responsibility to improve outcomes for all of Oxfordshire's children and young people and, in particular, for our most vulnerable groups. The Trust is committed to the following underpinning principles. We will:

1 Work together to meet the needs of all children and young people in Oxfordshire, ensuring that organisational boundaries are not an obstacle.

We will do this by:

- Focusing our efforts on prevention and early intervention to reduce the need for intensive, higher cost interventions later on;
- Working with, rather than 'for' or 'to', children, young people and families, supporting them to help themselves;



- Promoting innovation and more efficient ways of working and acting swiftly to make positive changes;
- Planning together, sharing priorities and delivering the actions set out in this plan;
- Providing access to the right services at the right time, including integrating services and practices where appropriate;
- Using our joint resources to ensure the best value for money, including through joint strategic commissioning;
- Developing a single workforce strategy and training our workforces together;
- Sharing information and ensuring that new ICT systems work properly;
- Providing open channels of communications to children and young people, their families and the wider public, to ensure that they are aware of our intentions, progress and outcomes. We will actively seek feedback to inform further development of this and other supporting plans.

2 Understand children and young people's needs and provide a higher level of service for those who need it the most, both in terms of support for individual children, young people and families, and for those in the most deprived groups or geographic areas

We will do this by:

- Listening and involving children, young people, parents and carers when designing, delivering and evaluating the services that we provide;
- Making excellent use of qualitative and quantitative data to drive what we do and where we put our resources.

3 Ensure our approach is underpinned by four guiding principles about how children should be respected²

These ensure:

Non-discrimination

Meeting the best interests of the child

The right to life, survival and development

Participation in decision making

Delivery of this plan will ensure that children and young people's rights are met:

- Provision rights (to education, health, support);
- Protection rights (from abuse, discrimination, kidnap, bullying);
- Participation rights (to information, expression, opinion).

² As set out by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in Articles 2,3,6,12.



5 Our improving outcomes and processes

Over the period of our last plan (2006 to 2009), we have put in place strong foundations and working practices that have delivered improved outcomes for children and young people in Oxfordshire. The most recent assessment of Oxfordshire performance confirms that this has resulted in improvement. The vast majority of services inspected by Ofsted have been judged to be good or better, a higher than average proportion of secondary and sixth form schools are good or outstanding, the two colleges are good and a high proportion of special schools and the Pupil Referral Unit are good or better. Services for looked after children are good (Ofsted). We have also:

- Strengthened our partnership working arrangements to ensure that different organisations share priorities and take a common approach, for example with District Councils and our thriving voluntary sector partners;
- Focused on increasing prevention and early intervention across all our services, particularly with vulnerable children, young people and their families, preventing serious escalation of issues and allowing us to further invest in improving front line services;
- Restructured to enable integrated delivery of children's services. There are now three areas (Northern Oxfordshire, Central Oxfordshire and Southern Oxfordshire), with 13 locality based partnerships served by multi-agency, multi-disciplinary teams, capable of working together more effectively through a common assessment framework and creating teams working with children, young people and families to meet their needs;
- Improved our use of data in making decisions, so that our resources are effectively targeted;
- Taken seriously the importance of involving and listening to children, young people, parents and carers in all stages of shaping and targeting our services to ensure that their needs are met;
- Greatly improved the functioning of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board.

6 Our priorities

The following section of the plan provides a high level overview of what we want to achieve for our priorities.

- Keeping all children and young people safe
- Raising achievement for all children and young people
- Narrowing the gap for our most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups

In our last plan our priorities were organised under the five Every Child Matters outcomes of Be Healthy, Stay Safe, Enjoy and Achieve, Make a Positive Contribution and Achieve Economic Well Being. In this plan, we are focusing on the three locally determined priorities, with the Every Child Matters outcomes woven throughout.



The delivery plan that accompanies this document will be available in draft on 19 October and describes in detail how we will deliver the objectives articulated in this plan, including who is accountable for delivery and how each activity relates to the Every Child Matters outcomes.

Additionally, we will be developing area action plans (for Northern, Central and Southern Oxfordshire), explaining how the objectives set out in this plan will be delivered locally. Progress at the county level will be monitored and evaluated by the Children and Young People's Trust, and the three Area Trust Boards will monitor delivery of the area action plans.

6a Keeping all children and young people safe

Keeping children and young people safe is the most important reason for different organisations to work together in partnership. We know that good communication, information sharing and partnership work between Oxfordshire County Council, the Primary Care Trust and National Health Service, Thames Valley Police, local schools, colleges and voluntary and community groups is essential to protect young people from harm. All partners have made a commitment that 'safeguarding is everybody's business'. Oxfordshire's Safeguarding Children's Board (OSCB) oversees and monitors the inter-agency arrangements to keep children and young people safe, including challenging partner organisations to ensure that the appropriate safeguarding services are in place. In addition the OSCB has a key role in disseminating the lessons learned from Serious Case Reviews.

“ People in care are bullied at school, kids either say that your parent's don't want you or laugh at you being in foster care ”

Young person, Oxfordshire

We want

- Children and young people to grow up in safe, healthy and supported environments;
- Children, young people and families to be able to access strong preventative and early intervention services before problems get worse;
- Children and young people, who suffer abuse or neglect, to receive the best possible service. This means that those at risk of harm, or suffering actual harm, will be a top priority for all agencies.

Key objectives to deliver improvements will be to:

Children and young people to grow up in safe, healthy and supported environments

- Reduce the numbers of children and young people who are bullied or feel unsafe at school or college;
- Reduce avoidable hospital admissions for children and young people, including increasing safety in the home and on the roads, and reducing incidents of self-harm;
- Increase the life chances of children and young people in care by ensuring they are safe, healthy and well-educated;
- Reduce the number of children and young people in custody, in order to reduce the known risk of harmful outcomes;



- Reduce harmful risk-taking and behaviour, including substance misuse and sexual risk;
- Work better together to keep children and young people safe from dangerous individuals, whether they are living in the community or accessed via the internet;
- Increase police engagement in primary and secondary schools, through linking safer schools partners to local neighbourhood policing teams.

Children, young people and families to be able to access strong preventative and early intervention services before problems get worse.

- Provide more targeted support at an early stage for vulnerable children, young people and families;
- Continue to build on the 'common assessment framework' and 'team around the child' approach;
- Improve safety for children and young people who live in households with domestic abuse, through more consistent and child-centred assessment, and improve responsiveness of domestic abuse support services;
- Prevent violent extremism by early identification of children and young people vulnerable to radicalisation, and working in partnership to protect them and build their resilience;
- Target resources where they are most needed and will have the greatest impact, by keeping the vulnerable groups identified in section 6c of this plan safe, and paying particular attention to meeting their needs.

Children and young people, who suffer abuse or neglect, to receive the best possible service. This means that children at risk of harm, or suffering actual harm, will be a top priority for all agencies.

- Keep children and young people safe by ensuring practice, across all agencies working with children at risk of harm and/or in care, is of the highest standard, complies with national and local guidance, and is consistent across the county;
- Provide improved and more joined-up inter-agency responses to children and young people whose distress causes them to pose a high level of risk of harm to themselves or to others;
- Strive to prevent any child or young person remaining in a chronically neglectful environment without effecting positive change;
- Respond quickly to protect when there are signs that a child or young person may be suffering sexual abuse;
- Children and Adult Services working together to break the cycle of deprivation, improve parenting and ensure the most vulnerable children are identified and not left in harmful situations.

The accompanying delivery plan provides more detailed information on what outcomes we want to achieve and the actions we will be taking.



6b Raising achievement for all children and young people

In the past too few children and young people in the county have realised their educational potential. We know that Oxfordshire's Key Stage results, including at GCSE and A level, are too low compared to other similar authorities. We are determined to continue to raise the achievement of all children and young people living and learning in Oxfordshire so that they do as well as, or better than, those living in similar areas.

Enjoyment and fun are fundamental to learning, socialising and growing into responsible citizens. We will maximise opportunities for children and young people to participate in positive activities and play, both in and out of school, college or other settings.

“ Reflecting on what you've learnt and how you learn helps you learn ”

Young person, Oxfordshire

We want

- Children and young people to achieve their full potential by accessing outstanding learning opportunities;
- Children and young people to feel happy, safe and to strive to do the very best they can;
- Children and young people to become confident to support themselves and actively contribute to their local community and beyond.

Key objectives to deliver improvements will be to:

Children and young people to achieve their full potential by accessing outstanding learning opportunities

- Improve assessment and examination results by ensuring that the County Council supports and challenges schools, colleges and other educational settings so that all obtain 'good' or 'outstanding' Ofsted inspections. We will ensure that good practice is shared and encourage partnership and collaborative working. We will introduce creative models of leadership. Resources will be targeted at those with the greatest need;
- Ensure the Primary Capital Programme and Building Schools for the Future initiative transform the environment for learning for everyone and raise achievement;
- Implement the raising of the age of participation in learning to 17 by 2013 through the successful transfer of responsibility for 16-19 year olds from the Learning and Skills Council to Oxfordshire County Council by 1 April 2010;
- Ensure that children and young people have access to high quality extended services in and around schools. This will ensure that our most disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people receive focused support, tailored to meet their needs, including one to one provision when required;
- Target resources where they are most needed and will have the greatest impact, by focusing on raising achievement of vulnerable groups (identified in section 6c), and paying particular attention to meeting their needs.



Children and young people to feel happy, safe and to strive to do the very best they can

- Improve attendance at school through maximising opportunities for children and young people to enjoy learning within school and beyond;
- Increase the number of positive and fun activities available, at times when children and young people most want them, including having access to safe open space, play grounds and sports facilities. Target most resources at areas of significant deprivation across the county and particularly at those who have the least opportunities for play and leisure time.

Children and young people to become confident to support themselves and actively contribute to their local community and beyond

- Ensure that children and young people have opportunities to make a positive contribution to their local community and become involved citizens, through enhanced provision of volunteering and community involvement;
- Engage business to contribute to the preparation of children and young people for the transition from school to work, and in provision of suitable work based learning opportunities, including apprenticeships, for young people who have left full time education.

The accompanying delivery plan provides more detailed information on what outcomes we want to achieve and the actions we will be taking.

6c Narrowing the gap for our most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups

Our most vulnerable groups of children and young people, at risk of being less healthy and achieving less well than their peers often face additional challenges.³ These groups are a priority for all partners in the Trust, across all their work. We will give these children and young people a better chance to succeed in life, through focusing on prevention and early intervention, working with them to build resilience, minimising the risks they face, and providing more targeted support.

In particular, we are concerned that while the size of the gap in outcomes is narrowing for our younger children, as the children get older the outcomes improve in absolute terms, but decline in relative terms, hence the gap widens as age increases. The number of young people not currently engaged in employment, education or training has been growing, and we know that we rapidly need to turn this trend around. Similarly, we know that as some children and young people get older, they are less engaged at school, feel less healthy and less safe. Our work to narrow the gap ultimately aims to increase the numbers of young people in employment, education or training and who can achieve their full potential.

“ Having a second chance and someone who believed in me made the difference. Give us second and third chances — don't give up on us even when you want to

Young person, Oxfordshire

³ Our vulnerable groups include children and young people growing up in deprived communities, with learning difficulties and / or disabilities, from some minority ethnic communities, who are young carers, in the County Council's care and care leavers, including unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people and privately fostered children, with mental health or substance misuse problems, living in inappropriate, inadequate or temporary accommodation, living in households where there is domestic abuse, who are teenage parents, or children of teenage parents, who are at risk of offending or in the youth justice system, not in education, training and employment, missing school because of persistent absence or exclusion.



We want

- To narrow the gap in achievement by providing for vulnerable children and young people who are missing out with greater access to high quality provision and services
- To ensure that children, young people and families benefit from effective, early and targeted support when they face additional challenges, in particular those with learning difficulties and disabilities
- Organisations to work together, in partnership with children, young people and families to break the cycle of deprivation and low expectation, particularly for children living in or on the fringe of poverty

Key objectives to deliver improvements will be to:

Narrow the gap in achievement by providing for vulnerable children and young people who are missing out with greater access to high quality provision and services

- Make sure that children and young people are engaged in full-time education programmes that have been tailored to meet their personal needs, and ensure that those who are not in education, employment or training gain the skills, knowledge and interests to support their progress to employment and training;
- Ensure that vulnerable children and young people can access the same play and positive leisure-time activities as their peers;
- Raise aspirations and life opportunities for vulnerable children and young people, by increasing the number and range of targeted schemes, such as volunteering and community service;
- Encourage vulnerable children and young people who are persistently choosing not to attend school to engage with positive activities and support services that promote re-integration;
- Work together to reduce the number of exclusions by building capacity in schools to support children and young people at risk of exclusion;
- Ensure that our alternative education for children and young people with challenging behaviour is locally available and judged to be outstanding.

“ If you can't get places you can't enjoy anything ”

Young person, Oxfordshire



Ensure that children, young people and families benefit from effective, early and targeted support when they face additional challenges, in particular, those with learning difficulties and disabilities

- Extend the intensive targeted work with families during their children's early years to vulnerable older children and their families. We will provide parenting and whole family programmes, ensuring that access to childcare and employment is promoted to strengthen family relationships and raise expectations in vulnerable families;
- Increase the number of Children's Centres so that every vulnerable child has access to Children's Centre services, to enable access to prevention and early intervention initiatives, including in rural areas;
- Ensure that children and young people with mental health needs are adequately and promptly supported, to prevent conditions from becoming worse;

“**You need to have chill-out areas for anyone who needs time-out, especially if you've got a mental health issue — not just for kids who mess around**”

Young person, Oxfordshire

- Provide children and young people in the youth justice system with targeted advice and support regarding their education, health and care needs. We will provide tailored preventative programmes, intervention programmes and diversionary activities for young people at risk of offending;
- Ensure that, where appropriate, young people who are offending or have been in custody can be safely supported in their local community and achieve positive outcomes;
- Increase access to positive activities for the most vulnerable young people through provision of targeted support. Including tailored preventative programmes for children and young people at risk of offending. And intervention programmes and diversionary activities for young people who have committed offences, and have been diverted from the criminal justice system;
- Improve capacity of schools and colleges to cater for children and young people with autistic spectrum conditions, through intuitive building design, workforce development, improved use of information technology and the development of personalised learning pathways. Ensure that all services work collaboratively and holistically around the child and family.

Organisations to work together, in partnership with children, young people and families to break the cycle of deprivation and low expectation, particularly for children living in or on the fringe of poverty

- Reduce the level of health and other inequalities by targeting our resources more effectively on those who need them most, particularly in our areas of greatest deprivation - Banbury, Oxford City, Abingdon/Berinsfield and the small pockets of rural deprivation;



- Continue to improve the outcomes and life chances for children and young people in the County Council's care, so that they grow up safe, happy, and achieving well, contributing to the continual improvement of services and with the same opportunities as those with strong family networks;
- Reduce the rate of teenage conceptions;
- Reduce the risk of young people becoming NEET or NIL (not currently engaged in employment, education or training or not currently engaged in learning), particularly seeking an improvement in these outcomes for vulnerable young people by intensively tracking all who receive free school meals and offering them additional information, advice and guidance that will encourage them to take up an appropriate offer of learning or training at the age of 16, and continue in at least part-time learning to the age of 19;
- Prevent ill health later in life by increasing rates of breastfeeding and immunisation, reducing exposure to smoking and reducing levels of obesity;
- Provide good quality housing standards (in social housing and private rented sector and supported housing) for vulnerable young adults.

The accompanying delivery plan provides more detailed information on what outcomes we want to achieve and the actions we will be taking.

7 Monitoring and Evaluating Progress

Performance Management

The Performance Management Sub-Group of the Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Trust is accountable for monitoring progress against the actions and targets within this plan, reporting to the Trust Board who will evaluate progress and drive change. Individual organisations are responsible for delivery, as set out in Appendix C.

We have established a partnership performance management framework using outcome-based accountability. This system is based on report cards for each target identified in this plan, pulled together into performance dashboards for the county as a whole and the three areas. The Performance Management Sub-Group will regularly review progress, and where necessary advise the Trust of changes required to the delivery plan. The three Area Trust Boards will monitor performance against targets in each area.



The different performance management systems of the partner organisations are well aligned with the objectives set out in this plan, including aligning targets and making accountability for delivery clear.



Key Milestones

Keeping all children and young people safe

Raising achievement of all children and young people

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Keeping all children and young people safe	<p>Target geographical 'hot spots' to reduce teenage pregnancy</p> <p>Implement new FACEIT service</p> <p>Implement inter-agency activities to reduce risk of a 'Baby P' case in Oxfordshire</p> <p>Establish inter-agency Safeguarding Advisory Panel for 'stuck cases'</p> <p>Implement the Think Family intervention project</p> <p>Allocate each young person in custody a senior CYPF champion</p> <p>Put in place multi-agency response to young people at high risk of self-harm and harm to others</p> <p>Prevent inappropriate hospital admissions for accidental injuries</p>	<p>Implement and monitor Domestic Abuse Assessment Tool across all agencies</p> <p>Deliver full entitlement for Early Support process</p> <p>Act on recommendations on review of services to drug using families including working with adults</p> <p>Implement outcomes of pilot two year olds 10 hour funding entitlement</p> <p>Integrated emergency department front door for paediatrics</p>	<p>Fully integrated Tier 2 services across health and social care.</p> <p>Complete multi-agency planning process for the most complex cases</p> <p>Full implementation of all CAF and TAC processes for all vulnerable children</p> <p>Full range of 24/7 services for children with injuries in the community</p>
Raising achievement of all children and young people	<p>Building Schools for the Future Strategy (BSF) for Change agreed with Partnership for Schools</p> <p>Develop commissioning strategy for school improvement</p> <p>Manage transfer of funding responsibility for 16-19 from LSC</p> <p>Develop 'Safe Place to Be' out of school provision in each secondary school</p>	<p>Establish Local Education Partnership (LEP) for BSF</p> <p>Improve % of 5 A*-C GCSEs and % achieving 2 levels of progress at end of KS2 to meet or exceed target</p> <p>Roll out commissioning strategy for school improvement</p> <p>Use the commissioning framework to develop a provider base that will enable more 16 year olds to stay in education or training</p>	<p>First construction work underway with Tranche BSF schools</p> <p>Enable access to all Diploma lines, Foundation Learning Tier and Apprenticeships</p> <p>Develop appropriate provision to ensure 100% participation of all 17 year olds</p>



Key Milestones

Narrowing the gap for our most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups

Service management

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
	<p>Create enhanced package of support for NEET young people including learning programmes to engage NEET teenage parents</p> <p>Deliver Aiming High programmes to provide childcare, short breaks and palliative care services for all disabled children</p> <p>Offer a full range of parenting support programmes</p> <p>Promote early attachment by ensuring a clear care pathway for women with peri-natal mental health problems</p> <p>Develop IYSS for vulnerable young people</p> <p>Pilot TAMH in 40 schools to ensure mental health support early</p> <p>Ensure all children 0-18 yrs have full access to the Healthy Child Programme</p> <p>Agree action plan for primary Success Project</p> <p>Establish Good Behaviour Game pilot</p> <p>Inclusion Strategy in place</p>	<p>Reduce Exclusions and Persistent absentees through Success project</p> <p>Young people friendly sexual health services available in every locality in/out of school term time</p> <p>Targeted SRE in schools in teenage pregnancy hot spots</p> <p>Breaking Cycle of Deprivation projects in Banbury & Oxford City delivered through Children's Centres and Extended Services</p> <p>Integrated early intervention services in place for young people with substance misuse issues</p> <p>Improve GCSE 5 A* - G outcomes for most vulnerable groups</p> <p>Multiagency care plans in place for all pregnant vulnerable women</p> <p>Clear integrated pathway for early access to mental health services & transition to adult services</p> <p>Transition plans in place for 100% of all young people with learning difficulty & disabilities in advance</p>	<p>Reduce number of young people in custody and on remand.</p> <p>Significantly reduce number of teenage parents</p> <p>Ensure all teenage parents receive evidenced based targeted intervention through the FNP or its successor</p> <p>Wide choice of accredited pathways available for all at level 1 and level 2 tailored to meet all needs</p> <p>All vulnerable young people in year six will have multi-agency transition plans for transfer to year 7</p>
	<p>Publish and implement Children's Trust Commissioning Strategy and Children's Trust Workforce Strategy</p> <p>Implementation of Contact Point for Early Years</p> <p>Fully embedded area service delivery</p> <p>Develop strong performance management processes that support and inform decisions</p>	<p>Implement and review Commissioning Delivery Plan and Workforce Delivery Plan</p> <p>Ensure "Your Welcome" standards are achieved for all services to make services young people friendly.</p>	<p>Deliver an integrated approach to all commissioning for children and young people</p>



Key Targets

	Latest Data		Targets			
	Year	Data	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Keeping all children and young people safe						
Emergency hospital admissions due to injury per 10,000 aged under 18 (NI 70)	2008/09	106.5	107.75	104	To be agreed	To be agreed
Stability of placements: percentage of children having 3 or more placements in the year (NI 62)	2008/09	9.42%	11.7%	11.0%	8.5%	8.0%
Obesity - Year 6: percentage obese (NI 56a)	2009/10	15.4%	15.4%	15.3%	15.2%	To be agreed
Obesity - Year 6: percentage measured (NI 56b)	2009/10	88%	85%	85%	85%	To be agreed
Percentage of young people aged 10-17 receiving a conviction who are sentenced to custody (NI 43)	2008/09	4.3%	<5%	< 4%	<4% (to be agreed by YOS Board)	<4% (to be agreed by YOS Board)

	Latest Data		Targets			
	Year	Data	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Raising achievement of all children and young people						
Young children's development measured by the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile: the percentage achieving the expected level for their age (NI 72)	2009/10	49.7%	52.8%	55%	To be agreed	To be agreed
Early Years results: the gap between lowest 20% and County average (NI 92)	2009/10	33.7%	33.6%	31.3%	To be agreed	To be agreed
Secondary school persistent absence rate: pupils missing at least 20% of sessions (NI 87)	2009/10	4.92%	5.3%	5%	5%	To be agreed
Key Stage 2 achievement: percentage attaining level 4 or above in both English and Maths (NI 73)	2009/10	72.4%	79%	79%	78%	To be agreed
Percentage of pupils progressing by 2 levels in English between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 (NI 93)	2008/09	85%	89%	89%	90%	To be agreed
Percentage of pupils progressing by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 (NI 94)	2008/09	81%	85%	87%	85%	To be agreed



	Latest Data		Targets			
	Year	Data	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Raising achievement of all children and young people						
Percentage of looked after children attaining at least Level 4 at Key Stage 2 - English (NI99)	2008/09	52.9%	31%	46.2%	60%	To be agreed
Percentage of looked after children attaining at least Level 4 at Key Stage 2 - Maths (NI100)	2008/09	35.3%	38%	53.8%	55%	To be agreed
Percentage of Key Stage 4 pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs A*-C (or equivalent) including English & Maths (NI75)	2009/10	52.8%	58%	60%	53%	To be agreed
Participation in positive activities (NI 110) Note: the figures are based on the number of Year 10 pupils who in the previous 4 weeks had participated in any group activity led by an adult outside school lessons such as sports, arts or a youth group.	2008/09	71.7%	78.5%	85%	85% to be confirmed	85% to be confirmed

	Latest Data		Targets			
	Year	Data	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Narrowing the gap						
Conceptions among under-18 year olds: percentage change in rate from 1998 baseline of 31.4 (NI 112)	2008/09	-5.6%	-29%	-37%	-45%	To be agreed
Percentage of young people aged 16-18 not in full time education, employment or training (NEET) (NI117)	2008/09	6.2%	4.0%	3.6%	To be agreed	To be agreed
Inequality gap in Level 3 qualification by age 19 (NI 81) Note: the figures are based on the difference between pupils who were and those who were not, in receipt of free schools meals at	2008/09	31.7 pc points	28 pc points	25pc points	To be agreed	To be agreed
First time entrants to the criminal justice system: rate per 10,000 10-17 year olds (NI111)	2008/09	832 (523)	1360 (856)	1330 (837)	1310 (820)	1285 (804)



8 Achieving Best Value

Resources

We will achieve good value for money by working as efficiently together as possible. At a strategic level, the Sustainable Community Strategy ('Oxfordshire 2030'), our Local Area Agreement and this plan provides the basis for partners to work together to deliver common goals for children and young people in Oxfordshire. As far as possible, partners' planning and resource allocation frameworks will be aligned to deliver the key priorities outlined here.

A snapshot of currently available resources spent on children, young people and families in Oxfordshire is provided below. In total, we estimate that there is a total annual public sector spend of approximately £677m, including £321m that goes directly to local authority schools.

Oxfordshire County Council

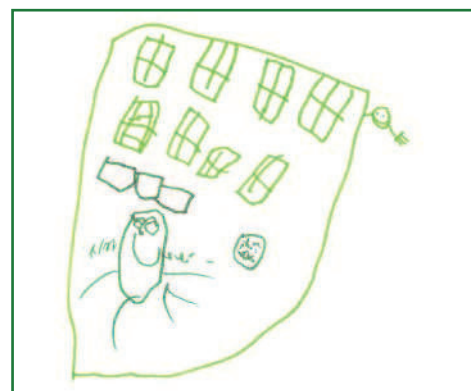
Oxfordshire County Council's 2009-10 gross revenue budget for children and young people's services is £504m. Of this, £321m is provided directly to local authority schools, leaving the remaining £183m to be spent on other children and young people's services and allocated by the Council's Cabinet in accordance with the priorities set out in the Children and Young People's plan. This is divided across the three priorities as follows:

Revenue budget	£ (million)
Keeping all children and young people safe	117
Raising achievement	220
Narrowing the gap	167

The County Council is currently undertaking a financial restructuring project that will bring budgets in line with the new area based delivery structure and the three priorities, and amalgamate or centralise complementary budgets where appropriate. This will ensure that our finances are more clearly used to deliver our priorities and value for money.

Over the current and next financial years, the total capital investment in children and young people's services, including schools and children's centres, will be in the region of £91m (£43m in 2009-10, £48m in 2010-11).

In addition, the County Council is now preparing to enter the Building Schools for the Future Programme which will help to deliver the three priorities outlined in this plan. The programme is the biggest ever national schools investment programme. It is more than just a school build programme, and is also an opportunity to improve teaching and learning so that all young people are equipped with the skills, attitudes and behaviours that will enable them to succeed in our fast-paced, globally networked world. We are hoping to access a minimum of £100m and current indications are that we will go to market in January 2011 to secure a partner.



myschools special

Child, Oxfordshire



Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust

The PCT can identify a spend of approximately £75m on children and young people (2009/10). This is broken down approximately into:

Revenue budget	£ (million)
Primary care (e.g. general practitioners, dentists)	20
Specialist high cost low volume commissioning (e.g. neonatal intensive care)	17
Acute children's hospital services	15
Children's community services (e.g. health visitors)	15
Child and adolescent mental health	7
Public health priorities (prevention focused)	1

Thames Valley Police

POST	FTE	ALL IN COST (£)
CJ (YOT) Admin	0.49	12,244
CJ (YOT) Admin	0.54	13,923
Youth Justice Coordinator (Ban)	1	30,324
Youth Justice Coordinator (Oxf)	1	31,077
Youth Justice Coordinator (Abin)	1	29,334
Youth Justice Manager (Abin)	0.86	29,832
	4.89	146,734
SSP & YOS Officers	x13	564,642
		711,376

District Councils

The City and District Councils provide a range of services that support children, young people and families. These include:

- Leisure services
- Play, open spaces and the environment
- Community development
- Housing
- Consultation and engagement
- Advice
- Grants to voluntary and community groups



Child, Oxfordshire



- Environmental health
- Community safety
- Economic development

It is very difficult to single out specific budgets but the City and District councils will work with other agencies to look at ways in which they can contribute to the joint commissioning of services.

Voluntary sector

There is a thriving voluntary sector in Oxfordshire, with approximately 1,600 organisations estimated to be working with children and young people. It is a wide-ranging sector and hard to calculate the spend, but we estimate that this is in the region of £10m per year.

The Learning and Skills Council (LSC)

“ I don't think people expect that I'll get a job, but I don't want to be on benefits — I want to work ”

Young person, Oxfordshire

The LSC currently (2009-10) provides £60m of funding to Oxfordshire based provision for 16 to 18 year olds. A further £7.5m is provided to fund apprenticeship schemes. In future years, this funding will transfer to Oxfordshire County Council as part of national changes.

Revenue budget	£ (million)
School Sixth Forms	28
Other Further Education Providers	32
Apprenticeships	7.5
Total	67.5

Strategic Commissioning

Oxfordshire PCT and Oxfordshire County Council have agreed to take active steps to merge their commissioning of children and young people's services during 2009-10 to deliver the plan's priorities. The ultimate goal will be the integration of all children's service commissioning under the umbrella of the Children and Young People's Trust.

A partnership commissioning strategy will be agreed by January 2010. This will focus on the strategic development of services to meet the identified needs of a particular population, thereby, improving outcomes by:



- Ensuring we really understand the needs of children, young people and families;
- Delivering major service reconfiguration and change;
- Monitoring the impact of these changes and influence the market;
- Improving value for money.

Workforce Development

We want Oxfordshire to be a place where people want to work and where all those who deliver services to children and young people:

- Work together across organisational boundaries in the best interests of children and young people. For example by sharing information and avoiding duplication;
- Ensure that all children and young people are kept safe;
- Are competent and able to deliver excellent services to consistent standards;
- Have the qualities and skills that children and young people need and want.

In order to equip all staff from all organisations with the competencies and skills that they need, we are currently developing a more detailed partnership workforce development strategy, taking into account the DCSF 2020 Workforce Strategy. This will be agreed by March 2010 and will set out proposals for joint workforce planning, improved recruitment and retention procedures, and enhanced training and career development opportunities.

9 Annual Review

This plan covers the period January 2010 to December 2013. The Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Trust will conduct an annual review of the plan, including assessing progress against milestones, considering latest outcome data and whether needs and priorities have changed. The Trust will ensure that the annual review is subject to consultation and that the results are published.

“ small people can do **big** things ”

Young person, Oxfordshire

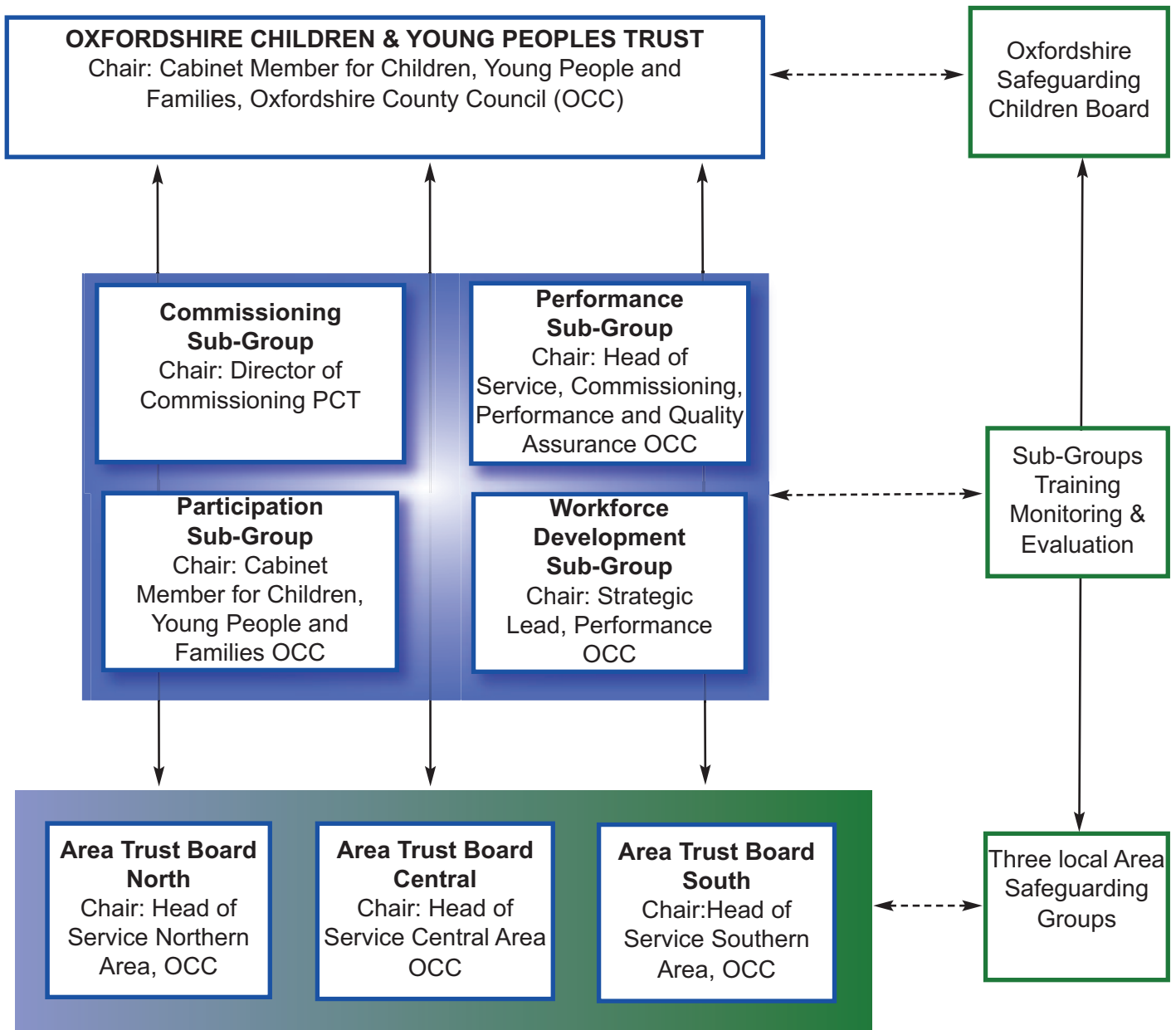


Appendix A: Our Partnership

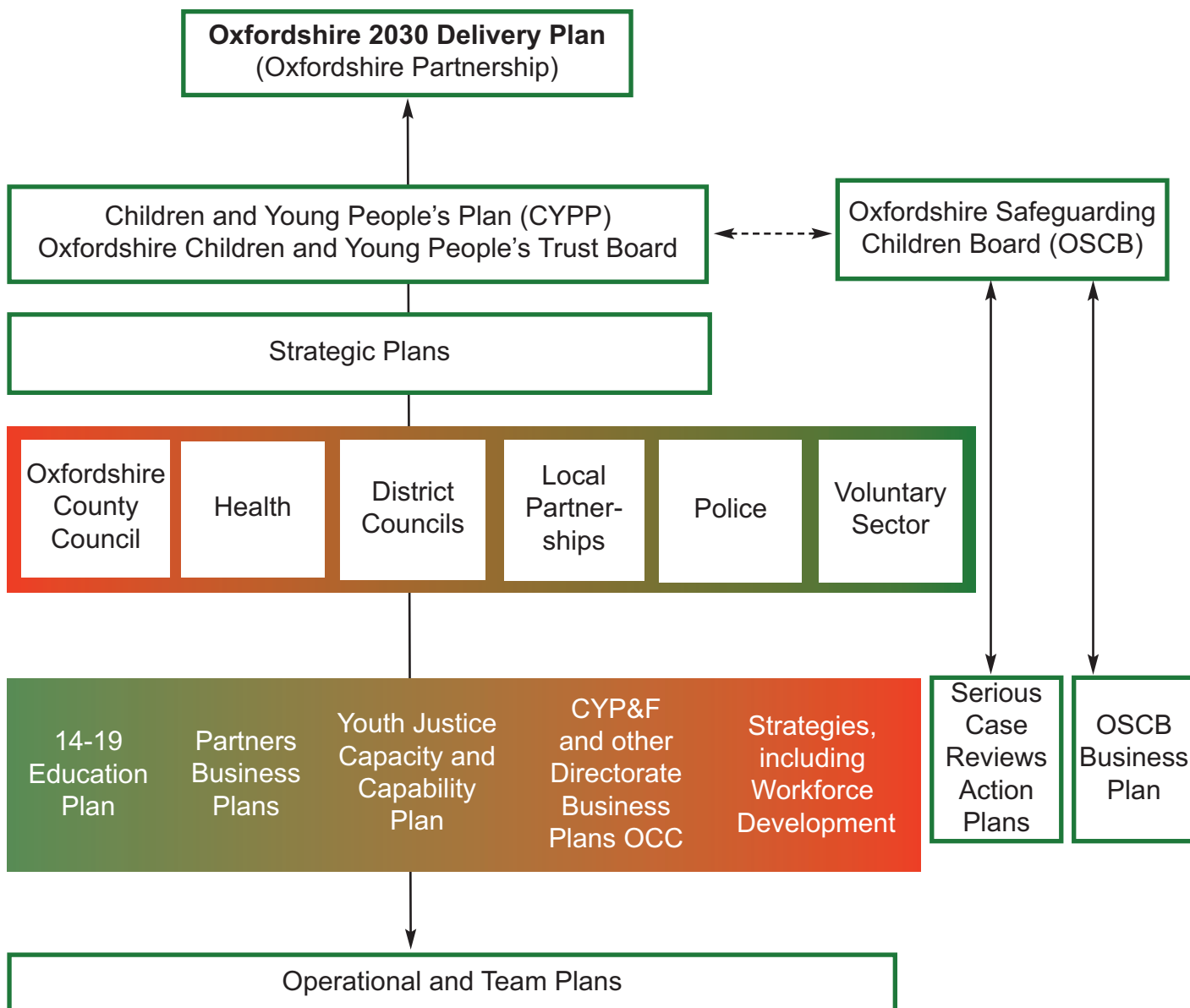
Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Trust Membership Role	Organisation
Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families (Chairman)	Oxfordshire County Council
Cabinet Member for Schools Improvement	Oxfordshire County Council
Director for Children, Young People and Families	Oxfordshire County Council
Chief Executive	Oxfordshire County Council
Head of Commissioning, Performance and Quality Assurance	Oxfordshire County Council
Non-Executive Director	Oxfordshire PCT
Chief Executive	Oxfordshire PCT
Director of Commissioning	Oxfordshire PCT
Director of Public Health	Oxfordshire County Council/ Oxfordshire PCT
District Councils Representative	District and City Council
Chief Superintendent	Thames Valley Police
Senior Representative	Job Centre Plus
Senior Representative	Sixth Form and Further Education Colleges
Senior Representative	Secondary Heads/Maintained Schools
Independent Chair of Oxfordshire Safeguarding Board	Non-Statutory Partners
Children and Young People Representation x 2	Non-Statutory Partners
Parent and Carer Representation x 3	Non-Statutory Partners
Head of Service Area Central	Chair of Area Trust Board
Head of Service Area Northern	Chair of Area Trust Board
Head of Service Area Southern	Chair of Area Trust Board
Voluntary and Community Sector Representative	Oxfordshire Council for Voluntary Youth Services
General Practitioner	National Health Service



Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Trust Structure



Appendix B: Connectivity between plans



Appendix C: Delivery of the plan — roles and expectations of key bodies and organisations

Body	Role	Expected to	Expects others to
OCYPT The Trust Board	To ensure full implementation of the plan, and consequent improvements in outcomes.	Hold partners to account for delivery against plan targets and priorities.	Deliver their commitments, collaborate and develop more integrated services to improve outcomes for children in line with this plan.
Area Trust Boards	To bridge the trust's strategic priorities and area and locality operational priorities.	Inform and shape the Trust's priorities; engage in local re-commissioning; enhance joint and partnership practice locally.	The trust to respond to local priorities; all partners to engage locally in service planning and development, and 'place shaping' for children, young people and families.
Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board	To hold the Trust, and its constituent agencies accountable for services' impact on Safeguarding Children.	Inform planning processes about key Safeguarding priorities. Hold agencies to account.	Deliver services to achieve impact on Safeguarding; Demonstrate responsibility and accountability for safeguarding.
The County Council	To provide infrastructure support to the Trust; To deliver the range of council services to children so as to reflect Trust priorities and statutory requirements; To ensure that other (non-children focused) council services support the delivery of this plan	Re-commission and re-design services as required	Engage with council services in partnership to improve outcomes.
District Councils	To deliver the range of council services to children so as to reflect Trust priorities and statutory requirements.		Engage with council services in partnership to improve outcomes.
Town and Parish Councils	To plan for their area's future and help identify priorities. Engage in community-led planning if there is local demand.	Engage children and young people in local democracy and shaping local children and young people's services through community led planning or other mechanisms.	Provide support, advice and other resources where required/appropriate.

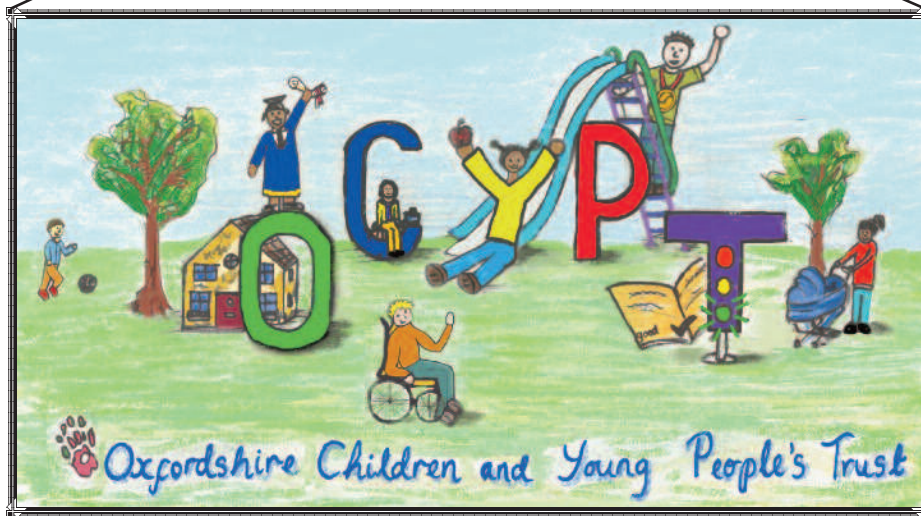


Body	Role	Expected to	Expects others to
Schools & other educational settings	To co-operate to deliver the aspirations and priorities in this plan, across the three priorities, and all five Every Child Matters outcomes	Engage in local and strategic partnership structures to shape and challenge service delivery and improve outcomes	Respond to the 'intelligence' held about children, young people, families and communities
Health/PCT	To cooperate to deliver the aspirations and priorities in this plan, across the three priorities, and all five Every Child Matters outcomes	Engage in local and strategic partnership structures, to shape and challenge service delivery and improve outcomes	Contribute, through this plan to the delivery of key health outcomes for children, young people and families
Police	To cooperate to deliver the aspirations and priorities in this plan, across the three priorities, and all five Every Child Matters outcomes	Engage in local and strategic partnership structures, to shape and challenge service delivery and improve outcomes	Contribute, through this plan, to the delivery of key community safety and crime reduction targets
Community safety	To cooperate to deliver the aspirations in this plan across the three priorities and all five Every Child Matters outcomes.	Engage in local and strategic partnership structures, to shape and challenge service delivery and improve outcomes.	Ensure that issues relating to community safety, tackling and reducing crime and the fear of crime in local communities are a cross cutting priority.
Voluntary Community and Faith sector	To cooperate to deliver the aspirations and priorities in this plan, across the three priorities, and all five Every Child Matters outcomes. Ensure the voice of the voluntary and community sector, and of those who access services from voluntary and community sector.	Engage in local and strategic partnership structures, to shape and challenge service delivery and improve outcomes.	Ensure the voice of the voluntary and community sector, and of those who access services from voluntary and community sector providers is heard and respected.



Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Plan

2010-2013



Design by

a pupil from an Oxfordshire Secondary school

If you want further information on our Children and Young People's Plan, please contact:

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

SCRUTINY REVIEW OF YOUNG CARERS

8 JULY 2008



Membership

Cllr Mrs Anda Fitzgerald O'Connor

Cllr David Turner

Cllr Carol Viney

Ben Jackson

Corporate Core

Ref CH015

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Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

8 July 2008

Young Carers

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Review set out:
 - To identify how the County Council (and its partners) may empower Young Carers (YCs) to approach the authority for help (there is a fear that they do not because conversely, they often think that they may be taken into care).
 - To achieve a change in understanding and perception around young carers.
 - To identify the gaps between provision, need/demand and availability of services.
 - To examine the social/economic/educational and health impacts of the issue.

2. The questions that the Review Group hoped to answer can be encapsulated as follows:
 1. How well does Oxfordshire do at identifying young carers?
 2. What are the main obstacles to young carers accessing support?
 3. What are the main disadvantages young carers experience that affect their health and well being outcomes?
 4. How should we assess needs, plans and co-ordinate services for young carers?
 5. How should we design effective inter-agency groups and support services for young carers?
 6. What are the best options for improving service outcomes?

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to endorse these principles (from the Young Carers Festival 2006 supported by the Children's Society, and (where appropriate) urges School Governing Bodies to adhere to them:

Oxfordshire County Council/schools should:

- 1. Recognise that the responsibility as a Young Carer (YC) can affect education and school work;**
- 2. Find out about them, what they need and how they are not like other students;**

3. Take time to find out about individual problems at home. Sometimes YCs are too embarrassed to say themselves;
4. Not automatically punish YCs if they are late. Sometimes this can't be helped because they are helping out at home;
5. Provide more support such as lunchtime drop ins and homework clubs;
6. Be flexible – giving more time and help to do homework or coursework;
7. Include information about YC and disability issues in Personal, Social Health & Sex Education lessons;
8. Let YCs phone parents to see if they are OK;
9. Make sure that there is a clear and up to date community notice board that has support info for YC and where else they can get help in the community;
10. Ensure teachers are offered training on YC and disability issues both at university and on inset days.

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED:

1. That Annex 2 to the Review is sent to all schools and linked to the Young Carers Strategy.
2. That Oxfordshire's revised 2008 -11 Young Carers' Strategy when issued, is widely disseminated and adhered to and that the specific educational needs of young carers are addressed.
3. That the principle of a discreet single point of contact in schools is accepted and that each school in Oxfordshire should be advised to nominate a single contact member of staff with responsibility for identifying and supporting young carers and that means, such as a "Toolkit" or School Guidance pack should ensure that training, internet accessible material etc are in place to assist them in this role;
4. That a guide/protocol is developed for schools, modeled on the practices elsewhere including Gloucestershire and the Children's Society;
5. That given the rural nature of Oxfordshire and that many Young Carers have no access to rural transport, resources are made available to ensure that YCs are able to access support services;
6. That with specific reference to the dichotomy in the legislative position referred to in paragraph 49, to lobby Central Government via the Local Government Association to consider a review of legislative requirements and resources around assessments for young carers;

- 7. To consider the priority accorded by the Council to young carers; does it aspire to provide better identification of, support for and resources for young carers to make Oxfordshire the leader among its peers?**
- 8. That based on the Oxfordshire PCT's experience, to work more closely with GPs to identify previously unidentified Young Carers and ensure that they and their families receive the appropriate support;**
- 9. To explore the benefits of different staffing models for YCs such as in Hertfordshire, where they have 4 Professional Assistants for YC's centrally based and working on a locality basis, in Children, Schools and Families (the equivalent in Oxfordshire being the CYP&F Directorate);**
- 10. To:**
 - (a) endorse in principle and enable the Children's Society (by arranging a formal event), to launch the Key Principles and the Whole Family Pathway within Oxfordshire, and that both are adopted, the latter as a tool for practitioners working with YCs;**
 - (b) bid to become one of the authorities involved in The Children's Society's roll out of the development of the Key Principles of Practice – Guidance for Practitioners and the Whole-Family Pathway;**
 - (c) endorse the roll out of development to local authorities;**
- 11. To consider in detail the key features of the Children's Society work as described in this evidence and in the publications listed in the bibliography, as good strategy and practice that the County Council should wish to adhere to;**
- 12. That the Review Group RECOMMENDS joint working protocols between adult and children's services (alongside the Schools protocol referred to earlier) for Oxfordshire;**
- 13. It is desirable to achieve a link up of all the direct and indirect funding streams available on behalf of YCs, especially support from Adult Services; this is what the Children's Society seeks to do and on a local basis this is RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet from the Review;**
- 14. That following the example of Nottinghamshire, a "critical friend", likely to be The Children's Society, is invited to evaluate the progress in implementing the new Young Carers Strategy and the impact of the initiatives recommended by this Review, in two years time.**

2. INTRODUCTION

3. The Children's Services Scrutiny Committee commissioned this Review during August 2007 because of its and other County Council scrutiny committees' interests in the situation of Young Carers and the level of recognition and provision made for them. The Review Group has compiled this report and made recommendations based on its findings and analysis. We believe that the Review has achieved the objectives set out in the scoping document attached at **Annex 1**.

Setting the scene - Aims of the Review and the Review process

4. The Committee appointed Councillors Mrs Anda Fitzgerald O'Connor, David Turner, Carol Viney and Mr Ben Jackson to undertake this Review. The scoping document approved by the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Group on the 8th October 2007 sets out the Review's objectives and specific tasks that it set itself. The Review was carried out through primary and secondary research and a series of interviews with key witnesses.

Background

5. To begin this investigation, the Review Group sought a definition of its subject "Young Carers". The one used by the OCC Young Carers Strategy is a commonly accepted definition and we believe that it broadly suffices, although there are other definitions and other characteristics of young carers that will be described during the course of this report:

"Children and young people under the age of 18 whose life is in some way restricted because of the need to take responsibility for the care of someone who is ill, has a disability, is experiencing mental distress, or is affected by substance misuse." (Carers UK -1998).

6. At the outset of this work, the Review Group was concerned that young carers were not being identified and that there were gaps in the multi-agency approach to assessing their needs, wishes, support and the availability of suitable provision. Young carers were identified by Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee as a key topic. They wished to investigate the issues around the topic in depth.
7. There has been considerable public interest in the issue, as indicated in recent media coverage and the Review Group felt that there was an opportunity to make a distinctive impact in this area; (to date, no other authorities have undertaken a scrutiny review of this topic from any perspective other than young people's health). There is no definitive and identifiable process for carrying out an individual

assessment of the carer's rather than the cared for person's needs. There is a duty for the local authority to assess needs but not an obligation to make provision at the level of need identified. (More detail concerning the legal position on assessment is included in The Children's Society's Summary of Legislation and Guidance in **Annex 8**).

8. Among the stimuli behind this Review was the Children & Young People's Plan (CYPP), its priorities and the first review of the CYPP: The priorities in the CYPP include improving educational achievement, reducing anti social behaviour including bullying; increasing participation in leisure activities, providing early practical support for vulnerable families, safeguarding children and young people who are at risk, and promoting healthy lifestyles for children and young people. These are clearly linked to the Council's Corporate priorities.
9. The priorities for Year 2 of the Plan include features that cut across Young Carers' issues:
 1. Preventative and early intervention support for children and young families at risk of harmful outcomes.
 2. Raising the educational attainment, enjoyment and achievement of all pupils with a focus on vulnerable and/or under achieving groups.
 3. Strengthening support to improve the emotional/mental health and well being of children and young people.
 4. Improving outcomes for Children, Young People and Families in areas of deprivation. (This links in with the Council's priorities around economic well-being too).
10. Priorities for service Integration in order to achieve these outcomes include culture and behaviour change to deliver integrated and preventative services, such as "Team Around the Child"; the common assessment framework; lead professional arrangements including better identification, tracking and targeting; engagement and capacity building of the voluntary sector; more effective engagement of schools and GP's and improved and joint information about services. However, it is worth noting that there are few performance indicators that local authorities are required to collect, or comparative statistics that are directly relevant to Young Carers.

The Young Carer

11. An analysis of a wide range of secondary research material outlined the characteristics of the Young Carer and the unique features of their situation. A summary of all of these, as drawn from the different sources, is set out in **Annex 2**. The Review Group particularly urges the reader to refer to this annex as it emphasizes the range of characteristics that young carers may display and that may often be

missed, the wide range of tasks and range of time spent in their caring responsibilities and hence the difficulty in actually defining and then identifying these children and young people.

It is RECOMMENDED that Annex 2 is sent to all schools and linked to the Young Carers Strategy.

12. At the beginning of the Review report, a definition of young carers was offered from the Oxfordshire Young Carers Strategy, but the Review Group wished to achieve clarification of this by obtaining primary evidence. Gloucestershire Young Carers say that “YCs are children and young people whose lives are restricted because they have caring responsibilities at home. It is estimated that there are at least 175,000 (identified) young carers in the UK.” The caring tasks that these young people are involved in range from:

- Nursing care
- Personal intimate care
- Emotional care
- Domestic care
- Financial care
- Childcare

“Young carers regularly carry out significant or substantial caring tasks; they assume a level of responsibility beyond what would normally be expected of children and young people.” (*Gloucestershire YC*).

The methodology/process of gathering evidence

13. In order to find out how the identification, management of and support for young carers was working and to suggest strategies, the Review Group gathered and assessed published research on this topic, visited a range of local authorities and other agencies, to find out how they approached this, benchmarked using relevant material and interviewed a range of “expert witnesses”.
14. As identified earlier, we also wanted to address some questions that clearly encapsulated what the Review was trying to achieve (*as taken from the East Riding Review of their Children & Young People’s Plan*) and these were listed in paragraph 2 of the report:

3. FINDINGS/EVIDENCE

15. The Review gathered a range of primary evidence from different sources as identified in **Annex 7**.
16. In the following sections, we explain in more detail the findings and the Review Group’s analysis and conclusions from these.

The County Council's strategy and work

17. Evidence provided by officers working within the Directorate for Children, Young People & Families (CYP&F) initially focused on the identification of and the authority's 3 year strategy for Young Carers.
18. It is estimated that Oxfordshire has about 12,000 young carers but the County Council only effectively reaches a small proportion of these (approximately 700). Current thinking within the Directorate is focused upon what the most appropriate service model would be. Having regard to this, the Directorate concentrates on "top tier provision" meaning, basically, where there is the most acute need. The single most desirable change among the officers working in this area would be to make young carers' issues a real "presence" across all of Oxfordshire's schools.
19. In trying to identify its appropriate service or a "best practice" model and to recommend it, CYP&F considers that in the future:
 - It must ensure that pockets of good practice get disseminated more widely.
 - That there is a direct service from the Young Carers' projects for those most in need.
 - That other areas of Children's Services need to get better at identifying the issues for Young Carers and of the need to face the challenge of YC projects being funded by grant.
20. In addition to those features and characteristics of YC's as identified in **Annex 2**, it was highlighted that YC's can be caring for more than one person in the household. Questioned about what the most desirable outcomes would be from the work of the Review and for the authority's future strategy, the CYP&F Directorate envisioned:
 - A "big push" around education.
 - That some pressure and ultimately some recommendations around financing would be welcome.
 - That there should be an identified individual in every school who is the "champion" for young carers. (recommendations elsewhere refer).
 - Influence from the young carer about whom their lead/designated person should be.
 - The goal would be for the Young Carer projects (including the South & Vale, the North & West and the City) to operate in more of a consultancy role, with the schools actually doing most of the recognition and provision.
 - Alleviating the fear among children that they may be taken into care (*we heard this on several occasions*). Parents were also inclined to hide the problems.
 - More early intervention activity.

21. The long term aim was for the Directorate to get from a position of crisis to being more proactive and intervening earlier.

How has Oxfordshire's strategy and development around Young Carers evolved?

22. It is "notable" that there is only one employee of the County Council specifically dedicated to YCs. Her strategy for 2005-08 has been adopted by the Princess Royal Trust as a prototype to recommend to other authorities and agencies.
23. During detailed discussions, the Review Group identified that:
- The Young Carers' Projects are concerned at the level of demand on them now.
 - With respect to the Review of Year One of the CYPP and the priorities for year 2; if a child is a Young Carer, he/she is going to fall within a range of the priorities – eg educational under-achievement, abuse, deprivation. All of the CYPP outcomes and priorities ought to have some relationship to Young Carers.
 - YC's are not easily categorised and so they are often invisible to the authorities.
 - The next review of Oxfordshire's YC strategy is due in 2008 and predominantly aims to do more of the same as now; it will not change drastically.
 - In the longer term (and this is critical) it is not just seen as being about having more people and more money, but about taking forward the strategic development role. This includes advising and urging agencies and groups of people in particular areas to take a lead themselves and do things that they are not doing at the moment, in order to join the gaps in identification, assessment and provision. This corresponds with the vision of The Children's Society, commissioned by the Department for Children, Schools & Families) DCSF to promote Whole Family Working across England. (At this point, the Review Group wishes to emphasize that there is some extremely good work going on in Oxfordshire as the Review goes on to explain. But sometimes it is in isolation and is not benefiting from good communication that could assist with the better deployment of the skills and resources that are available). Hence:
 - More "targeted services" are required.

It is RECOMMENDED that Oxfordshire's revised 2008-11 Young Carers' Strategy when issued, is widely disseminated and adhered to and that the specific educational needs of young carers are addressed.

How can a case be made for YC's to be a more deserving priority for CYPF than others?

24. In an ideal world, Oxfordshire's managers wish to use revenue funding properly on all YC Projects and to build up a mentoring scheme to equip people to offer incentives and a range of initiatives around young carers to all the schools across the county. Young Carers have been competing for attention in a service area of CYPF that is regularly overspent. In the officers' view there is a clear and identified need for joint budgeting across adult and children's services and with other agencies and this to some extent, will alleviate the current constraints on resources that the various services for young carers, working sometimes in isolation from one another, experience. Furthermore, whilst the current young carers' strategy is being revised, this ought to be done alongside the revision of the adult's strategy.

Local Government Information Unit Conference on Young Carers

The Conference, attended by Cllr Mrs Anda Fitzgerald O'Connor and Ben Jackson highlighted a number of issues that have a bearing on the Review's findings and conclusions, some of which recur elsewhere:

- The area is complex; much of the statistical material that is produced around the subject is fairly unreliable.
- There is a strong emphasis on the need for better integration between adult and children's services.
- Adult services should be included in the Common Assessment framework (CAF). The CAF for children and young people is a key part of a strategy to shift the focus from dealing with the consequences of difficulties in children's lives to preventing things from going wrong in the first place. It is a national standard approach to conducting an assessment of the additional needs of a child or young person and deciding how those needs should be met.
- There is a move towards incorporating young people's needs into an age 14 -19 transition towards adulthood plan. The transition from age 14 is critical, even more so up to the age of 24 and there should be more emphasis on bridging the gap at this stage between adult and children's services to avoid young people falling between nets.
- There is a growing demand to take young carers' respite needs into account.
- There is a need for "private time" for assessments - the assessment should be done partly away from the cared for adults and when the young carer is available; ie not at school.
- There is a need for a back up plan for young carers in case of illness/accident. What emergency plans were there in place?
- There should be better communication of local best practice.
- The Children's Society, commissioned by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) has produced a "Whole Family Pathway"

which was piloted in Oxfordshire (*and the usefulness and impact of this is discussed in detail later on*).

- Strong messages from the Conference were: "Do not hide behind departmental policies and procedures" and "Keep young carers' files open".
25. The Review Group noted the role of Oxfordshire in the development of the Children's Society's "Pathway". The County of Hampshire and the London Borough of Hillingdon also participated and its experience with YCs is of interest for comparative purposes. The Review Group heard that it was one of the first London boroughs to develop a Young Carers Project. Funded by the Carers Grant, as of March 31st 2007, there were 140 young people registered with it.
 26. Based on their experience gained with the Young Carers Project, Hillingdon Carers established a separate scheme to support young carers who have caring responsibilities for somebody with a substance misuse problem. The "SPACE" project was devised as a 12 month pilot scheme funded jointly by the Carers Grant and Drugs and Alcohol Services. This mirrors similar initiatives elsewhere and may be recommended for Oxfordshire. In Oxfordshire a new drugs policy is being issued. There may be opportunities to highlight this and to focus/place some emphasis on the relationship to young carers with parents who have drugs problems and on the opportunities for Children's Services, with the Drugs and Alcohol Action Team, to embrace work with YC's.
 27. Hillingdon Carers secured funding from BBC Children in Need to extend the project into a second year. It is part of a stretch target in the Local Area Agreement (LAA) signed between Hillingdon Council and partners, and Central Government.
 28. As "schools often do not know that one of their pupils is a carer and may not realize that these responsibilities could be the cause of poor attendance, performance, or socialization", it was suggested that schools must play a proactive role in identifying and then supporting young carers and that this should include a named lead for young carers in every school. This corresponds with the wish list of the CYP&F Directorate, Gloucestershire's practice for Young Carers and the developments being promoted by the Children's Society.

It is RECOMMENDED that the principle of a discreet single point of contact in schools is accepted and that each school in Oxfordshire should be advised to nominate a single contact member of staff with responsibility for identifying and supporting young carers and that means, such as a "Toolkit" or School Guidance pack should ensure that training, internet accessible material etc are in place to assist them in this role.

29. Given the importance of the issue of support for young carers in schools, the Review Group would strongly urge that the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee examines this issue in further depth, on an ongoing basis. The Authority should note the significant number of young people with caring responsibilities in Oxfordshire, and the challenges these responsibilities may pose for young people's personal development. The Review Group would like the Director for CYP&F to examine whether schools could do more to support young carers;

It is RECOMMENDED that a guide/protocol is developed for schools, modeled on the practices elsewhere including Gloucestershire and The Children's Society.

Gloucestershire

30. Gloucestershire's model was different to Oxfordshire's; it was the second Young Carers organisation in the country to be established. A BBC programme "Teenage Diaries" on prime time TV had featured and gained attention for a Gloucester young carer; local social services had subsequently acknowledged that there was not sufficient support for YCs. Gloucestershire young Carers (Gloucs YCs) is an independent charity; funding nowadays is via a purchaser-provider contract with the County Council (£56,000) (formerly a Service Level Agreement), £38,000 via the Carers Grant and the remainder from the Henry Smith charity, Comic Relief, Connexions and voluntary donations.
31. Leaflets and publications produced and which are available in libraries and schools, have been very effective in bringing young carers' attention to Gloucs YC. Gloucs also has a very active Young Carers Forum. It recently developed a "Befriending Project": this is a mental health project including a 20 week therapy group. There had been no adequate, easily understandable published material on this difficult area. Consequently, the production of "Minds, Myths and Me" has acquired a very high profile. The Royal College of Psychiatry had been looking at producing a similar guide, saw Gloucs's, endorsed it and has taken over the publication and distribution. There is a lot of stigma around young people caring for people with mental health problems and feelings of "it's my fault" so the project is potentially ground breaking. Gloucs YC (and this seems common among other projects) has never had any support/funding via health.
32. Recently, there has been a big push on schools; on raising awareness and establishing single points of contact (see Oxfordshire's thoughts above). For instance, one school in Tewkesbury where a single point of contact had been established, brought 19 new YCs to the YC project's attention from a known base of only 7 beforehand. This was an excellent case study where

children felt confident enough to come forward and where sufficient confidentiality was in place to allow them to do so.

33. The great advantage of Gloucestershire's situation is that it is an independent agency, so it isn't identified with or branded by agencies such as the social services. *(This is a feature that the Review Group returns to in its recommendations).*
34. During the course of the Review, the availability of transport to help YCs access support and activities has been a problem. Gloucs Young Carers decided to co-ordinate transport for YCs to all clubs and outside of home activities. It was costly (£40,000 pa) to pick up children at their doorstep, take them to a group or activities, but it made a significant and acknowledged difference to the children and their parents. Gloucs YC managed to provide a service to all known young carers across the County using volunteer drivers with their own cars.
35. In the light of this evidence:

It is RECOMMENDED that that given the rural nature of Oxfordshire and that many Young Carers have no access to rural transport, resources are made available to ensure that YCs are able to access support services.

36. Gloucestershire also has a service level agreement/ contract with the County Council that has a range of targets and statistics that have to be produced. Among these is the number of contacts with YCs, how many are waiting for assessment, how many have been assessed etc. In the last half year 63 new referrals were made to them; one must bear in mind that it is still a relatively small organisation with a total budget of £250,000 pa. (It is worth considering whether to implement a similar (ie service level agreement) arrangement in Oxon.)
37. It is also interesting to make some comparisons regarding staff complement. There are 9 workers, mainly part time. The Chief Executive works 30 hours p/w. There is also a Project Worker responsible for the day-to-day core services and a Development Worker who has worked with the BME community and produced some excellent results, eg an Asian Girls YC Forum. FTE is approximately 4.5 but there are various p/t workers around the county, sub-contracted via the CC and via a service level agreement with the Youth Service. Gloucestershire Young Carers funds these. There are also 13 YC projects around the county; the Befriending Project, a BEM (British Ethnic Minority) group, "Us Too" group for young carers caring for a parent with mental health problems. The Development Worker works with the travelling community and refugees. There is also a Mental Health Development Worker. This is a well resourced and supported service and the Review Group, in

its work, has had regard to what may be the optimum resource level required to deliver a good, but cost effective service given the growing demand. This has been borne in mind in the recommendations that follow from the evidence.

38. A recent area of development is in respect of young people who care for people with HIV or aids; an interesting but difficult area among YCs.
39. Having referred to Gloucestershire's policy and practice with regard to the role that schools may have, the main features that the Review considered could be drawn upon for recommendations about improvements in the circumstances of Young Carers in Oxfordshire were:
 - The Production of a leaflet such as their "Supporting the 'young' in young carer", or "A Guide to supporting young carers in school".
 - Specialist advice/documentation eg "Caring Matters" and "Minds, Myths and Me Fact Pack". (refer also to the Children's Society evidence and documentation).
 - Young Carers and the Young Carers Policy Template for Schools. (see **Annex 7**).
40. The Review would like to encourage the CYP&F Directorate to explore the feasibility of introducing similar projects/publications into Oxfordshire.
41. The Review Group wished to take stock of the arrangements locally in Oxfordshire for supporting young carers and took the opportunity to speak to witnesses from all 3 of the projects. The following sections cover the pertinent features that arose in relation to the review's aims and objectives.

South & Vale Young Carers

42. The background to the work that the Project does is quite typical and characteristic of what we have heard elsewhere; principally that there are serious "funding" issues about what is provided. Perhaps uniquely, at least in the CD and lesson style format, the Project provides Information Packs for schools (*examples are available and included in the bibliography*).
43. Concerns were expressed about the knowledge among YCs and how they make themselves aware of support and how agencies become aware of them - and once again, the importance of having a single point of contact in schools was stressed. Furthermore, that School Admission Forms & Home to School documentation should include

Young Carer references and that mentoring projects should be developed (see above).

44. The views expressed by a focus group of young carers emphasised several of the traits and characteristics identified by secondary research, as detailed in the main body of the report and in Annex 2 for instance:
- Tiredness; difficulties in getting up in the morning.
 - Not telling anyone at school about problems, because it will entail involving the YC's social worker.
 - Not telling people about their situations, because of the fear that they will be judgemental.
 - Not wanting sympathy – hence YCs only disclose their situations to close friends.
 - If advice is disseminated by teachers, it is not very helpful usually. Their experience is that teachers do not know how to identify YCs
 - It is not possible to be contacted at school except by mobile 'phone - and 'phones are not normally meant to be switched on in school.

Among the group there was an awareness of many other children and young people who haven't revealed themselves as YCs. Many do not appreciate that they are YCs; they are just "getting on with things" and accepting their situation as "normal". All among the focus group regarded their situation as normal until somebody else drew their attention to the Young Carers Project.

In terms of help, these young people said that what they needed was more people like their support worker at the Project, who can take them on visits and to events and provide support. They would like to have people to speak to who have experienced a similar situation. Schools' awareness needs to be raised; there needs to be better communication with them and within them; there isn't sufficient advertising or publicity on young carers available in schools. "Greater information, greater awareness" is what is needed – and they also hoped that they would be able (by funding) to produce their own Project website.

City Young Carers

45. The City YC Project drew the Review Group's attention to the context of support and involvement from among social care and health care professionals. Historically, there has not been much contact or input from schools. Consequently efforts at the moment, as with other projects and expert witnesses that the Review spoke to, are focused on reaching out to schools and work around intervention and prevention strategies from very early on in young people's lives. In an ideal world, the Project wishes to establish a "drop in" centre, ie, a proper Young Carers centre before and after school and "drop out" cards during lessons (*also referred to in the Oxfordshire PCT's*

evidence). Unfortunately, because it is a “charity”, schools have tended to pay lip service to the Project. It sees its role, principally, as “facilitating” schools to carry out the identification and support.

46. It has introduced an “e-motivate” project based around art and is now providing training in the city area for schools to develop awareness of YCs. In the light of the Children’s Society’s strategies, to which the report refers later, it is trying to make all the adult and young people’s agencies aware of how they can work together.
47. The Project provides a youth counselling service in conjunction with other agencies in the area including the County Council’s Youth Support Services who receive a number of referrals for young carers to both the counselling and mentoring services. The Project also offers a new programme, “My Space”, to support parents who are misusing drugs/alcohol. A website has been developed with the Primary Care Trust on needs in this area. The Young Carers’ themselves have developed their own website, which is probably unique across the country.
48. A view was expressed during discussions with the Project workers and to which there was consensus, that being a YC is something that people “should be proud of” and to acknowledge this, the authority might wish to consider celebrating their achievements.
49. Of some consequence in respect of what the Review recommends, future demand for young carers support is in the transition from age 16 to early adulthood. This is a critical age in terms of support available and there are 16 -17 year olds who strive to keep their families together as the costs and emotional impact of breaking a family up at this stage are immense. There is a disparity between on the one hand, giving responsibility to the YC as “the responsible adult” for the family and on the other, that no support is available from the social services. Earlier on, the Review Group referred to the critical need to bridge the gap between adult and children’s services, particularly as regards age 16-24 young carers. Local authorities are required to identify who YCs are, but as commented upon elsewhere in the report, they are not required to actually deliver carers’ assessments. There is a tension around on the one hand, the legal duty to assess and on the other, the absence of any obligation to provide for the assessed need.

It is RECOMMENDED that with reference to the dichotomy in the legislative position referred to in paragraph 49, the Cabinet lobby Central Government via the Local Government Association, to consider a review of legislative requirements around assessments for young carers.

50. There are also particular problems with ethnic minority carers and families; for example in Asian families it is very difficult to gain access as culturally, caring is seen as a family responsibility.
51. The Review Group is concerned that the perception within the Project is that in practice, social services strategy appears to be to “contain” rather than proactively work around YCs. This prompts the thrust in this Review about improving inter-agency work. The Project is a charity, 70% of its work is concerned with delivering the work of the statutory agencies. It is conscious of its duty of care and responsibilities in respect of relevant legislation and recommends that a more holistic family approach is needed.
52. Difficulties are encountered in the Project’s practical work, in so far as whilst they are partly independent, there are often perceptions among people that they are part of the social services.
53. Arising from this evidence, the Review Group urges that in order to develop strategies to improve the situation of YC’s, one must aim for “buy-in” from local businesses to help. The County Council must take a position. Does it want to be “aspirational”, or “to hide” behind statute? We request that the Director for CYP&F to assess the merits of using different YC models from across the UK. What has worked and what hasn’t across the UK?
54. If the County Council wishes to be “aspirational”, then it should/must explore the potential for joint budgeting between adult and children’s services, embedding attitudinal/cultural changes by for instance, communicating more effectively with and between the agencies concerned with young carers in Oxfordshire, such as the young carers’ projects – and its partners, such as the PCT.
55. If there is a “sea change” in attitude towards resource allocation, should the Council give YCs a higher priority than they are currently accorded and thus, being able to release resources to meet some of the demands made in the Review recommendations as regards transport and more support for the local projects?

The Cabinet is therefore RECOMMENDED to consider the priority accorded by the Council to young carers; does it aspire to provide better identification of, support for and resources for YCs to make Oxfordshire the leader among its peers?

North & West Oxfordshire Young Carers

56. Evidence to the Review provided by the North and West Oxfordshire Young Carers Project, focused firstly on the assessment and referral process to the Project and on the problems of securing sustainable funding; particularly base funding including salaries and session staff.

57. As indicated by other Projects and Young Carers' Groups who have contributed to the Review, there are substantial costs in providing transport for young people to attend activities and events organised by the Project.
58. It is conscious that Young Carers' needs, even among those registered with the N&W Centre, are not always met. There are particular problems working with teenagers in rural areas. Confirming evidence elsewhere once again, the Project's experience is that some YCs are missed altogether because of their fear of being taken into care. This being the case, it is suggested by the Project that the way forward is to do more work with schools. Raising awareness in schools is usually the way that the unknown YCs start to come to light.
59. It is argued that better provision for YCs will ensure better attendance at school (because absence among YCs is high), and better overall educational achievement. School attendance statistics are a revealing piece of evidence on YCs. If they - and even more so, achievement statistics are made available (the problem with the latter being the means of identifying who the young carers are), this would provide a convincing case for arguing on behalf of YCs particularly in the context of the "Every Child Matters" agenda and the Children & Young People's Plan priorities. These issues are returned to in more detail later in the Review. The aim of the assessment process briefly referred to above, is to provide indicators of improvement in these areas.
60. Work with the other Oxfordshire YC projects occurs and about 3 joint meetings a year take place to exchange views. There are plans to do more work together, such as a trip being planned to the Isle of Man and meeting up with the Oxford City YCs there.
61. The Review Group has been provided with a copy of a written request from the Project for funding that was originally submitted to the Cabinet Member and officers last November. The Project's view, as promulgated in the letter, is that the County Council is not fulfilling its statutory duties with regard to young carers. The position as described is that from the Project's inception in 2000 there was core funding from Children in Need but this has now expired. There is no regular major donor to replace the £31,000 provided per year from Children in Need. Therefore, the key message from the Project is the need for regular funding from the County. The uncertainty around funding is the major problem and core funding is necessary (see paragraph 54 above). Where it has previously been available, this has often been at the last minute and is not a good basis for forward planning. There have been problems in identifying who the project should be working with at County level, particularly so far as the educational side of Children's Services and funding attached to this is concerned.

62. The North & West Project has produced a DVD, wholly featuring the YCs themselves; “Good Days, Bad Days” provides a very useful insight into the experience of young carers and supports many of the themes and findings of this Review. Because of this, the Children’s Services Scrutiny Committee took up the opportunity of seeing the DVD when the draft report was presented.
63. When speaking to young carers at the Project, the Review Group heard that they did not wish to be singled out and treated differently at school. The young people also hoped that they could meet at the Project more regularly than once a month and in many other respects, highlighted the same issues about their situations as the other Oxfordshire Projects had.

OCC Children and Young People’s (C&YP) survey

64. During the summer of 2007, a wide-scale survey took place in Oxfordshire which included 6,539 children and young people (C&YP) aged 4 -16+ from 35 schools across the county who completed online surveys in April/May 2007. Two additional ‘booster’ surveys supplemented the overall data, to ensure that disabled C&YP and C&YP who may not have had access to the survey through schools were fully included. One question in the survey asked about whether C&YP cared for somebody at home, and if so whether they cared for parents who were ill/disabled, their own babies/children or for other family members. The **Annex (3)** only reflects the findings related to C&YP caring for a parent or another family member who is not their own child.
65. The data suggests that information on young carers needs to be used with some caution, as 21% of secondary C&YP and 38% of primary C&YP say they care for someone at home. There would be no particular reason why there should be such a striking difference in caring responsibilities for older and younger C&YP, so it is possible that younger children took the question to mean looking after someone with a short-term illness, e.g. a cold.
66. The key findings relating to young carers by and large reflect what the review heard from other evidence sources, but indicate particular features concerning ethnic minorities, in and outside school activities and work.

Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust (PCT)

67. Loosely relating to Young Carers, the PCT has a role around “Safeguarding Services”; this is a form of scrutiny in so far as it checks on whether the safeguarding measures among other authorities and agencies are meeting requirements. (The recent Joint Area Review had some reservations about how the Oxfordshire

“Safeguarding Board” has been operating and the Review Group is keen to strengthen up the links between the County’s services and the Trust’s safeguarding services).

68. Its Partnerships Team includes work on health inequalities and the lead on carers’ issues. The latter includes representation on the Carers Strategy Group for Oxfordshire, to progress the strategic work of the PCT around carers. The main thrust of this strategic work currently, is through the GP practices - principally through the IRIS Project (Identify, Register, Inform and Signpost). The purpose of this is to identify the carers through the GP’s practices and to then refer them to the Carers’ Projects. The GP’s national contract now requires them to have a Carers Protocol. (Please refer back to page 13 about having a similar protocol/guide applying to schools and the recommendation to this effect).
69. Phase 3 of the Children’s Centres development programme has just been rolled out. It is envisaged that the Children’s Centres and the support that they provide will be linked up much more consciously with Young Carers and deprived groups.
70. Corresponding with what other sources of research and witnesses revealed, the PCT raised the identification of YCs as being very difficult to achieve. YCs themselves make it difficult to be identified for a range of reasons. But, the PCT’s view is that GP’s are actually in the best situation to recognise who is being cared for and who is doing the caring. However, their national contract is very narrow and the identification of YCs and the protocol regarding them is consequently very narrow in scope. GPs are also restricted on occasion, by confidentiality issues. A new leaflet has just been issued for surgeries (see below), aimed towards carers self-identifying. Work is progressing alongside all the 3 Carers’ Centres in Oxfordshire together with the GP surgeries to try to improve the referral rates via the GPs.
71. In common with other evidence to the Review, the PCT emphasises the need for a multi-pronged attack to the issue of YCs, particularly involving schools. It is considered that schools must have a better feeling than most for the characteristics and the predicament of YCs and fundamentally, it is a matter of training and development and raising and keeping the profile of YCs in people’s minds. The best means of understanding their plight or situation is by actually talking to them (a comment that we heard repeatedly from various sources during the review).
72. A new scheme that the PCT wishes to develop on a local basis is a card that YCs can show at school which immediately identifies them to teachers and staff, together with their need on occasions to attend to circumstances at home during the school day. (*This is a scheme*

that the Review Group also heard suggested by the Oxford City Young Carers Project).

73. It is of some concern that there hasn't been a process or structure in the past for schools to contact the Trust directly about their concerns for YCs. But the Common Assessment Framework and the Oxfordshire Locality Co-ordinators (there are 13) are starting to counter this problem and arrange "Team Around the Child" meetings. "Every Child Matters" highlights YCs under the "Be Safe" agenda and YC issues are cross cutting throughout several aspects of it. It is considered that this is helping to raise the profile of YCs, which in essence is the aim of the Review and of the agencies that are involved in this area. It is essential that the Review conveys the message that the situation of Young Carers permeates the "Every Child Matters" agenda.
74. The Review had earlier questioned the role and purpose of the County Council's Young Carers Strategy and in particular, how the agencies subscribing to it participate in multi-agency work and in progressing action plans to meet objectives. The Trust is part of the Countywide Strategy Group but has been challenged about its Carers Strategy not adequately addressing YCs. In discussion with the Review Group, the Trust was keen to highlight its responsibilities in relation to the County strategy, the areas that it has taken action upon and of its desire to see the YC strategy and YC issues generally having more prominence in the Countywide Strategic Group and in the Carers Strategy.
75. Based on the PCT's evidence concerning what is working within partnership arrangements around young carers, all the partners and agencies involved with YCs should seek to enhance and progress their inter-agency work in the interests of efficiency and effectiveness - thus potentially reducing the material budget implications (see paragraph 54 above – may change).
76. The Review wishes to emphasise that raising attainment in schools is a high priority, as is economic well-being. As identified by Hertfordshire (below), there is no measure of attainment among YCs (whereas there is for instance, among cared for children). Improving the position of YCs may make inroads on the overall attainment statistics and on economic well-being. The Review and the agencies involved are starting to consider the destinations of YCs as they reach the "transition" to adulthood later on – including work, further and higher education. YCs may be a significant factor in the overall attainment levels.
77. Evidence to the Review has suggested that there is some resistance from GPs to actually referring YCs to the social services. For this reason the GP's protocol now indicates that they ought to refer cases

to the Young Carers' projects as the acknowledged experts in this area.

78. Additional material circulated to the Review Group during discussion with the PCT is indicative of a strong effort to raise the profile of young carers within the PCT and with agencies working alongside the PCT. There have also been efforts to progress action plans relating to the YC strategy and to progress inter-agency work, notably the PCT summary of activity in respect of the Oxfordshire Young Carers Strategy 2005-08 (see bibliography). This in particular, indicates the extent of attention that the PCT is placing in its inter-agency work on young carers.

It is RECOMMENDED that based on the Oxfordshire PCT's experience, to work more closely with GPs to identify previously unidentified Young Carers and ensure that they and that their families receive the appropriate support.

Hertfordshire Young Carers

79. Hertfordshire County Council is a Beacon authority for its work in developing a multi-agency Young Carers strategy. Its activities, working alongside Carers in Hertfordshire Young Carers Project include a focus on "raising awareness" about Young Carers and in sustaining momentum on this with the various agencies that may be involved, once their attention is caught. (In this respect its focus and ethos is similar to what is being promoted by the The Children's Society).
80. It is acknowledged that identification of young carers is a common problem and its current initiatives are mainly around localising projects and extended schools work. (Again, this approach corresponds with the thrust of work elsewhere including Oxfordshire County Council and the local projects, Gloucestershire and the The Children's Society.)
81. The multi-agency approach involves and relies on better co-ordinated, inter-agency work. As the authority has become a victim of its own success in identifying YC's, other agencies must be drawn in to developing and managing services. Significantly, Hertfordshire identifies the need for lead responsibility where there is a dependency on inter-agency work.
82. The strategy focuses resources at the acute end among YC's. Because of its proactive work with other agencies, especially Health, Hertfordshire bucks the trend elsewhere in so far as it receives referrals of YC's via Health agencies including GPs – and the Youth Service; (although there are strong informal links between the Young Carers Projects and Youth Support Services in Oxfordshire). As

identified in evidence elsewhere, transport costs, resources, funding and sustainability issues feature highly.

83. Educational attainment is a high priority for the authority; as highlighted elsewhere there is no measure of attainment recorded and the impact that YC's can have on overall achievement levels is acknowledged.
84. Given the problems identified by several witnesses to the Review, Herts most recent work has been focused on BEM Young Carers.
85. In particular, what may be recommended from Hertfordshire as good practice to emulate includes that:

It is RECOMMENDED that the Cabinet explores the benefits of different staffing models for YCs such as in Hertfordshire, including 4 Professional Assistants for YC's centrally based and working on a locality basis, in Children, Schools and Families.

86. Furthermore, on the basis of the visit to Hertfordshire and experience elsewhere, the Review Group considered the usefulness and benefits to introducing an annual YC conference, as first raised by the Oxford City Young Carers Project. There are a lot of sensitivities around such a suggestion, but it is worth keeping on the "back burner" for thought in the future.
87. At this stage, the Review Group would also wish to draw attention to the Social Care Institute for Excellence research briefing 11: The health and well-being of young carers (referred to in the bibliography) that corroborates most of the features of the Young Carers situation that we have heard about or seen elsewhere.

The Children's Society

88. Discussions with four of the Children's Society's (CS) staff conveyed a wealth of information and evidence. The Review Group considers that the work around developing the "Key Principles" (see **Annex 4**), "The Whole-Family Pathway" (www.youngcarer.com) and the national programme of development and training with local authorities may be recommended wholesale to the Cabinet for the County Council to adopt and adhere to. In doing so, it may be possible to bridge the gap between the identification of the young carers and their needs on the one hand and on the other, the delivery of inter-agency, whole family solutions in practice. Evidence throughout the Review has highlighted the shortcomings in inter-agency work around the young carer.
89. A range of other documents and publications were referred to and these are in the bibliography to the review report. To reiterate, these are the key points that came out of the discussion.

It is RECOMMENDED to:

- **endorse in principle and enable the Children's Society (by arranging a formal event), to launch the Key Principles and the Whole Family Pathway within Oxfordshire, and that both are adopted, the latter as a tool for practitioners working with YCs;**
- **bid to become one of the authorities involved in The Children's Society's roll out of the development of the Key Principles of Practice – Guidance for Practitioners and the Whole - Family Pathway;**
- **endorse the roll out of development to local authorities.**

90. The Society has received £600,000 from central government over the next 3 years to work with 9 local authorities (LAs). For the time being, 5 have been selected – Bristol, Slough, Wandsworth, Thurrock and Nottingham. The CS's strategy is to establish whether there is a focus/steering group in the local authorities for young carers; then to attach the Children's Society to the steering group to help them develop their strategies. The different LAs require different kinds of support for their work with YCs, but usually it is around the development of strategies and joint protocols. The Society will then work alongside the LAs for 6 months and train/develop them in the practice of YC caring and support.
91. A range of events will run alongside this Project where the CS, health and voluntary sectors will be represented. The aim of these events (they will be run as conferences) is to promote the Key Principles and The Pathway and for the LAs to present their YC strategies. A range of workshops will be run alongside with speakers and exhibition stands - so that all of the resources available can be linked up. Oxfordshire, Hants and Hillingdon were the pilots for the development of the Key Principles and The Pathway. As an independent agency the CS was in a better position to get the senior management on board at these authorities.
92. Three road shows will also run over the next 3 years to update people on what is happening nationally. As many as 200 LAs will be invited to these, the aim being to discuss and update development of the Principles, Pathway and the work on the current project with the 9 LAs and also to raise the profile and then keep the opinions of the YCs foremost; to this end a national YC Forum has been set up to seek views from them about what they would like to tell the professionals working in their area. A DVD has been produced to support this.

The Review Group RECOMMENDS the Cabinet to consider in detail the key features of the Children's Society work as described in this evidence and in the publications listed in the

bibliography, as good strategy and practice that the County Council should wish to adhere to.

93. The view of the Children's Society is that the "Every Child Matters" agenda suffuses all of the work and activities that it is promoting. The Review Group believes that it should also pervade all OCC's work around YCs as it is clear that the CYPP priorities have cross cutting features that intertwine with their situation. It is fair to say that OCC's strategy and action plan strongly emphasise actions derived from the "Every Child Matters" themes and this is also the case in other authorities' strategies, for instance Hertfordshire's.
94. There is a different emphasis in the comments that the various agencies and projects working with YCs have made; on the one hand, a focus on money and resources and on the other, (namely The Children's Society) on the need for culture change through creating better awareness. It is in this context that the Review wishes to remind the Cabinet of the importance of Young Carers in the achievement of the "Every Child Matters" agenda and of the need for greater awareness among agencies as a means to "culture change" within the County Council.
95. On page 11, the Review Group referred to the need for joint budgeting across adult and children's services and with other agencies. It is a matter of necessity that the Council adopts an approach/policy that Children and Adult Services work better together to achieve solutions for YCs and that there is better inter-agency working among all the agencies involved. Towards this end, the Children's Society has been promoting the principle of and actual "joint working protocols".

The Review Group RECOMMENDS joint working protocols between adult and children's services (alongside the Schools protocol referred to earlier) for Oxfordshire.

96. The ultimate aim of work for and on behalf of YCs is that there should be no child in need of assessment and support; ie practitioners should eventually reach a stage where there are no children in need. Furthermore, given the evidence and information provided to this Review:

It is desirable to achieve a link up of all the resources available on behalf of YCs, especially support from Adult Services; this is what the Society seeks to do and on a local basis this is RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet from the review.

97. The Review Group endorses the CS's strategy for the delivery of The Pathway and a whole family, inclusive approach to the management of and support for young carers that follows from this. Furthermore,

during the latter part of the Review, it was drawn to our attention that Nottinghamshire, in progressing its strategy and work with young carers is seeking a “critical friend” evaluation in two years time. This would be useful to emulate and:

It is RECOMMENDED that following the example of Nottinghamshire, a “critical friend”, likely to be The Children’s Society, is invited to evaluate the progress in implementing the new Young Carers Strategy and the impact of the initiatives recommended by this Review, in two years time.

The Role Of Schools

98. Quite a lot of the evidence in this report has referred to the role of schools and a lot of emphasis has been placed on schools being more proactive, on putting more support and advice into them, etc. However, we did not have any real evidence of experience and practice from teachers and other professionals in schools.
99. Quite late on in the Review process we received evidence that is summarised here, that largely confirms what the Review Group has heard elsewhere, ie “a mixed bag” – some good schools/professional, some less so; problems in identification and in resources.
100. The following reflection that the Review Group received via the Council of Oxfordshire Teachers Organisation Secretary is regarded as broadly reflective of the thoughts and views of classroom teachers in schools and those with pastoral/SEN responsibilities in particular: It is “a curate's egg situation: good in parts, rotten in others and not being aware “of any systematic method of identifying and supporting young carers in Oxfordshire schools”. This is regarded as a role that Children's Services should undertake (rather than teachers) and to allocate the appropriate resources to enable this to happen without adding to teachers' workload.
101. Individual Education Plans would not be particularly welcome as they are time consuming and almost inevitably take that time from actually working with the children and young people. It would be “a cheap substitute” for the real solution - social services providing sufficient care for the person in need to enable the young carer to attend school as normal.
102. Views from other teaching professionals were in broad agreement with this; for instance, no formal way of schools identifying young carers, albeit that schools are often the first to alert others because they have 'accidentally' found YCs. A particular school had been informed by a family/young carers project that a Year 3 child was a carer. For the child concerned the 'school' is the 'constant' and as always when schools are so aware of the child's home life they have to continue to meet the demands of raising standards/achievements

whilst trying to bring some normality/ happiness to their life. It feels that the 'team around the child' concept following a CAF (Common Assessment Framework) as a result of Every Child Matters, (all of which we have raised as critical themes during the Review) leaves the schools with 'more' to do rather than providing 'extra support' for individual children.

103. Professionals have also found that there is limited guidance and advice available via the Intranet and in particular instances, where there is an Outreach Awareness Worker employed by the Young Carers Project to provide support, the funding comes via the Lottery. This is a fragile and unsustainable basis from which to work, although teachers are grateful for the advice that is available from the Oxfordshire YC Projects.
104. In other case studies worth quoting: In one, the School Counsellor checks the transfer notes from Year 6 teachers to see if there are any Young Carers in the new intake. Students are also identified by Heads of Year and these are passed to the School Counsellor, who then refers to Young Carers Project and checks that follow-up contact has been made.
105. In another, there is a problem in so far as the particular Young Carers Project is based too far away, so contact has been made with another Project, out of county, where the bus links are better. The local Young Carers organisation is explained to students each year in assemblies and a representative comes to the Year Team meetings to meet form tutors. There is some excellent support from the local organisation (Project) for young people, who have contact via text, email or phone with a support worker. The main limitation is that this is a daytime-only service. In practice, it is more likely to be schools than the social services that will uncover young carer "situations", eg. when following up on absences. As most secondary schools now use support staff to do attendance checking, it is considered that there may be another "case for some joined-up funding" (that has cropped up as a theme several times in this work), so that an alert to other agencies can be part of the pastoral system.

4. CONCLUSIONS

106. From the evidence gathered, the principle conclusions drawn are:
 - That single points of contact should be promoted and be in place across all schools who can give appropriate advice and time to Young Carers.
 - That there must be a focus on the intertwining of the "Every Child Matters" agenda and the situation of young carers.
 - There is a need for better, more effective, partnership or inter-agency working; not necessarily at a cost if a lead is identified

according to circumstances, as this will enhance efficiency in identification and provision for YCs.

- That, modelled on the provision for children with special education needs there may be a case for introducing something similar to an “Individual Education Plan” for YCs and we would ask that this is addressed in the new Strategy for Young Carers 2008-11.
- Acknowledgement on the one hand, of the legal duty to assess and on the other, the absence of any obligation to provide for the assessed need – and that action, possibly through lobbying central government, should follow.
- That there is a strong connection between YCs and the County Council’s focus on educational attainment and economic well-being.
- That there are models of good practice that could enhance the good work that is already being done in Oxfordshire by Children’s Services and the young carers’ projects and in particular, that the Children’s Society model provides good examples through the Key Principles, The Pathway, work with local authorities and work in raising awareness that should be adhered to and/or endorsed by Oxfordshire.

Concluding Remarks

107. The Review Group is satisfied that it has achieved the aims and objectives of the Review as set out in the scoping document. The Group would like to thank all those who contributed as “expert witnesses” or by providing information, or as hosts for any visits that Members made.
108. It is difficult to find easy and comprehensive solutions to the issues that have emerged, but it is hoped that the conclusions and recommendations that we have reached will assist the Cabinet and other agencies in developing policies and strategies and in contributing to improvements in performance in work with young carers in schools and between agencies.
109. There are other people and agencies that the Review could have invited contributions from. However, with limited resources and time, it is considered that a cross section of useful evidence has been achieved given these parameters.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

110. It is important that schools (and other agencies) that work with Young Carers acknowledge the needs expressed by them. These are eloquently expressed by the Young Carers “top 10 tips for schools” produced from the Young Carers Festival 2006, supported by the Children’s Society.

It is RECOMMENDED that the Cabinet endorses these principles and urges School Governing Bodies to adhere to them:

Oxfordshire County Council/schools should:

- 1. Recognise that the responsibility as a YC can affect education and school work;**
- 2. Find out about them, what they need and how they are not like other students;**
- 3. Take time to find out about individual problems at home. Sometimes YCs are too embarrassed to say themselves;**
- 4. Not automatically punish YCs if they are late. Sometimes this can't be helped because they are helping out at home;**
- 5. Provide more support such as lunchtime drop ins and homework clubs;**
- 6. Be flexible – giving more time and help to do homework or coursework;**
- 7. Include information about YC and disability issues in Personal, Social Health & Sex Education lessons;**
- 8. Let YCs phone parents to see if they are OK;**
- 9. Make sure that there is a clear and up to date community notice board that has support info for YC and where else they can get help in the community;**
- 10. Ensure teachers are offered training on YC and disability issues both at university and on inset days.**

111. Young Carers should be enabled and encouraged to attend and enjoy school, be prepared for working life, find that schools are fully accessible and have inclusive communications' practices in place and that the positive aspects of caring are recognised and valued.

Glossary

BEM – British Ethnic Minorities

C&YP – Children and young people

CYPP – Children & Young People's Plan

CYP&F – Children Young People & Families (Directorate)

CS – The Children's Society

DSCF – Department of Schools, Culture & Families

GPs – General Practitioners

IRIS (Identify, register, Inform & Signpost) – an Oxfordshire PCT project

LAs – Local Authorities

LAA – Local Area Agreement

PCT – Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust

YC's – Young Carers

**Scrutiny Review – Young Carers – Scoping Document –
Version 4**

Review Topic (name of Review)	Young Carers
Review Reference Code	CS015
Parent Scrutiny Committee	Children's Services
Lead Member Review Group (Cllr's involved)	Cllrs Fitzgerald O'Connor, D. Turner, Viney and Mr Jackson
Member responsible for tracking (nominate one Cllr)	To be decided
Officer Support (Scrutiny Review Officer lead)	Julian Hehir
Rationale (key issues and/ or reason for doing the Review)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are concerns, as yet unsupported by documented evidence, that young carers are not being identified and that there are gaps in the multi-agency approach to assessing their needs, wishes, support and the availability of suitable provision. • Young carers have been identified by Members (including two of the authority's Scrutiny Committees; Social & Community Services and Health) as a key issue. • There is considerable public interest in this issue, as indicated by recent media coverage. • There is an opportunity to make a distinctive impact in this area of current interest (to date, no other authorities have undertaken a scrutiny review of this topic from perspectives other than health). • There is not an absolutely definitive and identifiable process for carrying out an individual assessment of the carer's rather than the cared for person's needs. There is a duty for the local authority to assess needs but not necessarily to provide at the level of need identified.
Purpose of Review/Objective (specify exactly what the Review should achieve)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify how the County Council (and its partners) may empower young carers to approach the authority for help (the fear is that they do not because, conversely, they often think that they may be taken into care). • To identify the different kinds of Young Carers, in terms of age and caring

	<p>responsibilities (eg age and disability of the cared for).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify how Young Carers are catered for in the context of the “Every Child Matters” agenda. • To achieve a change in understanding and perception around young carers. • To identify the gaps between provision, need/demand and availability of services. • To examine the social/economic/educational and health impacts of the issue.
<p>Indicators of Success (what factors would tell you what a good Review should look like)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will have identified who the young carers are. • Will have identified local needs and wishes. • Will have identified how the service for young carers can be improved, including the ongoing identification process.
<p>Methodology/ Approach (what types of enquiry will be used to gather evidence and why)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desk based review of topic. • Making comparisons with what other authorities do well/not so well in respect of Young Carers. • “Client journeys” Including looking at the transitional phases between the different age groups of young carers (by testimonials, written evidence). • Interviewing officers. • Questioning witnesses.
<p>Specify Witnesses/ Experts (who to see and when)</p>	<p><i>(Most of the witnesses and contacts identified can be grouped together as appropriate for interview/visit/documentary evidence purposes).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andy Couldrick – Head of Early Years & Family Support (CYP&F). • Deborah Parkhouse - Strategic Development Officer- Young Carers (CYP&F). • Nick Welch (Head of Social & Health Care Planning & Partnership) role in relation to Supporting People fund. • Oxfordshire Parent Partnership (& Parents). • Officers etc from other authorities for comparative purposes. <p><i>(Mainly by visiting, rather than inviting to interview) the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banbury, Witney & Bicester Young Carers (contacts: Veronica Jones/June Sutherland – Young Carers Project). • Carers Centre (South & Vale) 3-5 Lydalls Road, Didcot -Young Carers Project

	<p>(contacts: Sarah Norvis/Mitch Warwick).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Carers Centre. • Children’s Society –Young Carers; Edward Rudolf House, Margery Street, London WC1 0JZ - www.childrenssociety.org.uk Children’s Society Carers Initiative - Jenny Frank • The Princess Royal Trust for Carers (PRTC) Alex Fox (Assistant Director-Service Development). • Oxfordshire Family Support Network. • SENCO’S (possibly via Brenda Williams, COTO Secretary). • Schools’ Pastoral Heads of Year Groups. • Representatives of Primary School Headteachers. • Representatives of voluntary organizations. <p><i>(Initially by written input):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oxfordshire PCT (including sample of GP’s, Health Visitors, District Nurses - as regards Assessments etc) and School Nurses. • District Councils (eg, as regards “Staying Put” scheme and its successes and the Districts’ housing responsibilities). • Carers Forum. <p><i>and</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young carers <i>(via Ben Jackson as parent link & through written evidence, testimonials)</i>. • People being cared for <i>(including the effect on older people of having young carers)</i>. <p><i>(refer also to detailed contacts listed in other documentation).</i></p>
<p>Specify Evidence Sources for Documents (which to look at)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission for Social Care & Inspection – “Being a Young Carer” – Views from a Young Carers Workshop. • Guide to Carers’ Organisations – OCC Carers Strategy 2004-05 – OCC (due to be revised and re-written in March 2008); Young Carers Policy (is there a requirement that there should be one?) • New Carers Strategy (in development, from Central Government). • Times Online article – “Crying Out To Be Heard”. • “Doubts on Respite Care” – Oxford Mail article. • Early Years & Family Support Business Plan – 2007/8 -10/11. • The Children’s Board

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Every Child Matters” framework. • National Foundation for Educational Research – www.nfer.ac.uk/emie Young Carers page. • Legislation/Guidance (<i>see below</i>). • Assessment documents that may indicate whether the needs of young carers are actually being assessed. • Evidence from other independent research. • Evidence and focus from education and schools’ perspectives. • Evidence from any other reviews. 		
Specify Site Visits (where and when)	To include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Carers’ projects. • Other voluntary organisations listed among witness details. • Other authorities. 		
Specify Evidence Sources for Views of Stakeholders (consultation/ workshops/ focus groups/ public meetings)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus groups (possibly). • LGIU “Young Carers: Securing a Better Future” conference – 3 Oct 2007. • Visits. • Interviews. • Written evidence of experiences (not attributed) from young carers. 		
Publicity requirements (what is needed – fliers, leaflets, radio broadcast, press-release, etc.)	Not identified at this stage, but this an issue that will grab the public imagination.		
Resource requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person-days • Expenditure 	Anticipate approximately 6 months, which will equate to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 40-50 days ○ Approx £2,500 (for conference in October, visits, other research required). 		
Barriers/ dangers/ risks (identify any weaknesses and potential pitfalls)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Over-ambitious in scope. • Difficulties in accessing carers and agencies, and in recommendations being binding upon the latter. • Difficulties in keeping to the projected timescale. • Not achieving review objectives. • Practicality of implementing recommendations, particularly if they are costly. 		
Projected start date	Sept 2007	Draft Report Deadline	26 th February 2008

Meeting Frequency	Sept 12 th , Sept 25 th and Sept 28 th 2007 (for first witnesses) and thereafter, every 2 weeks approximately.	Projected completion date	March 2008
When to evaluate impact and response	March 2009		
Methods for tracking and evaluating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking template. • Lead Member tracking. • Question and answer follow up session at Committee. 		

ANNEX 2

Identification and characteristics of Young Carers

(These are derived from a range of sources that are listed in the bibliography).

How do Young Carers cope? They may experience:

- Emotional difficulties
- False maturity
- Poor nutrition and lack of personal care
- Being bullied
- Poverty
- Poor social skills and isolation.

In school, they can often be identified by:

- Poor attendance
- Being unable to take part in extra curricular activities
- Lack of concentration
- Unable to meet deadlines
- Behaviour problems
- Leaving school with few or no qualifications.

Why do they go unnoticed? “Young carers may conceal their caring role; it is important to give assurance that they and their families will be treated with respect and sensitivity.”

How can they be helped? (In this instance the Review Group meant, by teachers in schools): By:

- An understanding approach
- Making allowances
- Developing individual support plans
- Encouraging parental involvement
- Promoting respect.

“Young carers need to hear that their education matters and that their school will look for ways to help them fully participate and succeed.” (Glos YC)

What type of care do young carers give?

- Offering personal care
- Giving emotional support for the person they are caring for, and the wider family
- Administering medication
- Meal preparation, planning, shopping and budgeting, plus housework
- Care of other family members
- Coping with family pressures.

What impact does caring have on the lives of young carers?

- Mental ill health and psychological problems.
- Tiredness and fatigue
- Physical health problems
- Preventative care.

What main tasks do young carers do?

- Emotional support
- 24 hour personal support, including toileting, washing and putting someone to bed.
- Being the support and backup
- Doing many jobs around the house that the adults cannot do
- Being the one who looks after other children
- Takes messages
- Shopping
- Looking after oneself
- Keeping the cared for person company
- Medication
- Needing to know about how to give out medicines safely
- Taking the person they are caring for out and about.

How does being a young carer affect the child?

- More work and taking on much more responsibility than other children
- Giving up part of one's childhood.
- Costs to one and one's future
- Suffering own emotional and stress problems that begin to damage own mental health
- Caring as "something you just get on with".
- Reactions and prejudices of the public
- Schools need to teach all children more awareness – and basic politeness – towards people with disabilities and their carers
- One doesn't get bullied for being a young carer, but it's just as bad as being bullied if one has to put up with all the comments
- Staff at school keep asking for explanations
- Being a young carer often makes one the outsider in school
- It is the family who get bullied, rather than the carer
- Need for other people to be understanding towards people with disabilities.

What difference does being a young carer make at school?

- Sometimes peaks of heavy caring demand happen at the same time as school is putting a peak of pressure on
- It is important that teachers are aware of what it is like having varying demands on one as a young carer, and that they make allowances

- If doing caring tasks for someone at home, sometimes during the night, the carer is simply tired and can't concentrate at school
- The carer's needs and the support the school may plan are not in phase
- A need for a person on the staff at school that they could talk to at any time about their caring pressures
- Schools need to understand that being able to keep in touch is important for both the person being looked after, who may be left home alone, and their young carer
- Poor wheelchair access.

What are the risks in being a young carer?

- Risks of lifting someone heavy
- Cared for person lashing out at the carer
- Risk that one might be getting something wrong in the way one is doing the caring job
- At risk of getting ill oneself
- Need to be taught about how to make traveling less risky
- Young carers need to know first aid.

What should staff working with children and young people be taught about young carers?

- Teachers need to be taught awareness of disabilities and what young carers do
- To be flexible in what they expect
- Need to be aware that young carers will sometimes be stressed
- Offer young carers practical help
- Recognise the needs and wishes of each individual carer
- The "fine line between helping and intruding"
- Being a young carer can make a difference to how the child gets on with other children or young people.
- Staff such as teachers could help either teach, or find the right person to teach each young carer more about the particular disability of the person they are looking after.

The Barnardo's Young Carers "Caring Before Their Time" – a research project from 2004, includes summary pages of findings. The findings are **broadly** similar to the main themes/issues picked up above, plus there are a few other features eg:

- The majority of young carers provide 1-14 hrs care a week;
- One needs to be inclusive in approach;
- Striking a balance between the rights of the cared for and the children who do the caring;
- Need to acknowledge rights of young children as children and carers;
- getting rid of misconceptions about inadequate parenting skills of parents needing the care;

- Emotional and psychological effects; social effects; negative effects on education;
- Particular problems for young carers from ethnic minority groups;
- Lack of clarity with regard to definitions and identification of young carers hinders recognition and awareness;
- UK characteristic (absent in other European countries) of focusing on the development of a comprehensive and integrated support system;
- Identification of positive effects for young people who undertake caring roles;
- Comprehensive whole family approaches.

Oxfordshire County Council Children & Young People's Survey

Key findings with respect to young carers

- **More boys than girls** said they are young carers (15% v 10%)
- More C&YP from **BME groups** said they were young carers than white C&YP
- A particularly **high number of Asian C&YP** look after an ill/disabled parent (22% v to 12% white C&YP)
- A higher number of Asian C&YP also say they look after someone else compared to white C&YP (22% v to 17%)
- Within the BME group, Bangladeshi and Chinese C&YP have particularly high rates of caring responsibilities
- Young carers in Year 7-11 are **less likely to stay on in full time education post-16** than their non-carer peers (81% v 62%) and similarly less likely to aspire to go to higher education (23% v 16%)
- Young carers are more **susceptible to being bullied** (20% v 16% of Year 7-11's looking after a parent) and to **bullying** than their counterparts (20% v 16% of Year 7-11's). However there are no significant findings relating to higher levels of racism, homophobia, name-calling, physical assault or having things stolen
- Young carers are slightly **more likely to skive off school** than other C&YP (21% v 17% of Year 7-11's)
- Young carers looking after a parent in Year 7-11 are **more likely to smoke** than other C&YP (11% v 6%) and **more likely to drink alcohol most days** than other C&YP (11% v 3%). They are also more likely to buy alcohol most days (10% v 2%)
- **Young carers** seem to either **do a lot of activities** (sporty and non-sporty) out-of-school – **or none at all**. This is a different pattern to other C&YP
- Young carers tend to do **less sport at school** than their peers (45% v 56% do 2 hours + p/w)
- Young carers feel more **listened to at school** than other C&YP (28% v 18%)
- Young carers are more likely than other C&YP in Year 7-11 to **have a part-time job** (26% v 18%)
- Young carers are **more likely to be receiving special help** at school in Year 7-11 **for behaviour/learning** (29% v 12%)
- Slightly more young carers in Year 7-11 plan to **leave school as soon as possible** (as opposed to leaving *after* GCSE's) than other C&YP (9% v 7%)
- Young carers **tend to be more involved in democratic activity** and know more about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child than their peers
- **Young carers attend breakfast clubs more** than other C&YP (12% v 4%)

The Children's Society - Key Principles of Practice for Young Carers and their Families.

Funded by the former Department for Education & Skills, The Children's Society is developing Key Principles of Practice which, are intended to be used along side legislation and guidance already in place and, to support agencies to respond to the recommendations of national policy that affect young carers and their families in ways that are sensitive to their needs. Using the Key Principles of Practice will help to ensure the best use of resources and promote whole family working. They also enable practitioners to deliver practice based on the 5 aims of Every Child Matters:

- Be Healthy;
- Stay safe;
- Enjoy and achieve through learning;
- Make a positive contribution to society;
- Achieve economic well-being.

The Principles are:

- There is a need to safeguard children by, working towards the prevention of children undertaking inappropriate care of any family member.
- The key to change is the development of a whole family approach to needs led assessments, to ensure that service provision is child focused and family orientated.
- Young carers and their families are the experts in their own lives and as such must be fully involved in the development and delivery of support services.
- Young carers will have the same access to education and career choices as their peers.
- It is essential to continue to raise awareness of young carers and, to support and influence change effectively, work with young carers and their families must be monitored and evaluated regularly.
- Local young carers projects and other direct services should be available to provide safe, quality support to those children who continue to be affected by any caring role within their family.

ANNEX 5

The experience of one Young Carer

“My brother (X) is 15. He has severe learning disabilities, and some physical disabilities. (X) needs constant care and attention. There are many things that he cannot do for himself, such as bathing, going to the toilet, and preparing food. I help my parents with caring for (X), and I also help a lot more around the house. (X) has no concept of danger, so he needs someone to be looking out for him constantly. He can therefore be hard work to look after, and although my parents never wanted this to get in the way of my schoolwork or social life it was an extra element of responsibility.

(X)'s disability was often made worse by bouts of poor health, and recently with bouts of anxiety. This has been very stressful on the whole family. As mum and dad already had a lot to worry about, I often felt that I didn't want to burden them with my worries or problems, so I often chose to deal with them on my own.

As well as bearing more responsibility, I often was unable to do things that other people my age did because of (X)'s disability. For example, we were not able to go away on holidays abroad, go to theme parks, or even take part in activities such as cycling and walking. As a family we always had to consider (X)'s needs first. Although I was always happy to accept this, it did not make for a normal childhood.

Another difficult aspect was people's reactions to (X). Although most of my friends accepted him, other people of my age did not know how to deal with him, and some even made fun of him. This was very difficult for me to deal with.

I started going to Young Carers when I was 12. At Young Carers I was able to meet with other people of my age who understood what it was like to care for another person in their family. We had regular meetings, and we also went away on trips, either for days out or for short holidays.

Going to Young Carers helped me in a number of ways, as it gave me time away from my responsibilities at home. I was able to meet with other people of my age who understood my situation, so we were able to support each other, and also to help each other forget our responsibilities at home for a few hours while we enjoyed being ourselves. During particularly difficult periods, I was able to meet on a one-to-one basis with XX or YY, who ran the Young Carers Centre, to discuss things that were worrying me. They offered me support and advice, and provided a shoulder to cry on.

However, just as importantly, Young Carers allowed me to take part in activities that I would otherwise not have been able to do, such as scuba diving, abseiling, and visiting theme parks. I went away on an adventure weekend with Young Carers, where I took part in activities I would never have

been able to do on holiday with my family, such as zip wiring and canoeing. It was a really enjoyable holiday, but most importantly, I was able to enjoy myself without having to worry about anything. The fact that I enjoyed Young Carers and got so much out of it meant that Mum and Dad could spend some time alone with (X) without having to worry about me as well, so in that way it was also beneficial to us as a family.”

ANNEX 6

List of expert witnesses and contributors to the Review, in sequence

- Deborah Parkhouse – Children, Young People & Families Directorate
- Andy Couldrick – CYPF
- Alison Partridge – CYPF
- Helen Predgen-Lay – Gloucestershire Young Carers
- Sarah Noviss - South & Vale Carers Centre
- Michaela Warwick – South & Vale Carers Centre
- Verity Falvert-Martin – Oxford City Carers Centre
- Kim Moore-Howell - Oxford City Carers Centre
- Young Carers from the Oxford City Young Carers Project
- Jenny Frank – The Children’s Society
- Michelle Chobanova – The Children’s Society
- Helen Leadbitter – The Children’s Society
- Jenny Hine – The Children’s Society
- Bryony Brown – Oxfordshire PCT
- Jane Bell - Oxfordshire PCT
- Becky Gwynne - Project Officer -Young Carers & Disabled Children - Children Schools and Families – Hertfordshire
- Lorraine Cronin – Professional Assistant for Young Carers - Children Schools and Families – Hertfordshire
- Cindy Honor – Carers in Hertfordshire
- Veronica Jones – North & West Oxfordshire Carers Centre
- Jean Miller - North & West Oxfordshire Carers Centre
- Robert Edwards - North & West Oxfordshire Carers Centre

- Brenda Williams – Secretary of the Council of Oxfordshire Teacher Organisations
- Young Carers from the South and Vale Young Carers Project
- Young Carers from the North & West Young Carers Project

Bibliography

- A Guide to Carers' Organisations and Helpful Contacts – OCC – Feb 2006
- “Being A Young Carer – Views from a Young Carers Workshop” – Dr R Morgan, Commission for Social Care Inspection - 2006
- Caring Before Their Time? - Research and Policy Perspectives on Young Carers - Ann Marie Halpenny and Robbie Gilligan - joint publication by Barnardos and the Children's Research Centre – 2004.
- Carers UK website (and Policy Briefing document 2005)
- “Child Carers left ‘to cope alone’” – A Stickler – BBC News – May 2007
- “Crying Out to Be Heard” – Caroline Scott – Sunday Times – 5 August 2007
- The Children's Society :
 - National Young Carers Initiative – The Include Project – “Supporting Pupils Who Are Young Carers” and “Supporting Pupils with Substance Misusing Parents”.
 - Promoting Whole Family Practice for Young Carers – Raising Awareness of Young Carers and Their Families – A Report for Oxfordshire County Council - 2005
 - Whole Family Pathway (draft) – A resource for Practitioners – 2007
 - Taking Responsibility – Inter Agency Policy for Supporting Young Carers - 2003
 - Newsletter of International Symposium held in Nairobi – May 2006
 - Summary of Legislation and Guidance – Jan 2008
- Children & Young People's Plan 2006-09 – OCC – 2006
- CSCI – “Being a Young Carer” - 2006
- Early Years and Family Support Structure Chart – OCC
- Early Years and Family Support Business Plan – 2007/08 – 2010/11 - OCC
- Gloucestershire young carers website, links and publications:
 - “Minds, Myths and Me” fact pack – 2006
 - C&YP Directorate Contract with Gloucs Young Carers Contract monitoring Board Report – April – Sept 2007
 - “Caring Matters” – Oct 2007
 - A Guide to Supporting Young Carers in Schools” leaflet
 - “Supporting the “Young” in Young Carers”
- Hampshire Young Carers website
- Hertfordshire:
 - Young Carers services in Hertfordshire
 - Young Carers Support Groups in Schools
 - Young Carers (After School) Support Groups across the County
 - Young Carers Project Referral Form
 - Hertfordshire CSF Young Carers Strategy 2007-2012
 - Young Carers Newsletter

BME Young Carers Pilot project Report
Welcome to the Young Carers info pack.
Young Carers – “A Guide to Practice Young Carers in Need” –
Aug 2003

- Hidden Lives – Unidentified Young Carers in the UK – Barnardo's – 2007
- Oxfordshire Annual Carer's Forum – 14th November 2007
- Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust:
 - The PCT Carers Action Plan summary
 - PCT Action Plan 2007-2009
 - PCT Carers Action Plan Glossary of Terms
 - GP Carers Information Pack (Feb 2008) containing:
 - A covering letter
 - Two sided summary
 - GP Carers Protocol – good practice example
 - How to identify YC information sheet
 - Staff poster – “Are you carer aware?”
 - Posters for patient waiting areas
 - Patient leaflet – “Are you a carer”?
 - PCT Young Carers summary of activity.
- Oxfordshire's Strategy for Children & Young People with Caring Responsibilities and their Families – 2005-2008
- SCIE Research Briefing 11: The Health & Well-Being of Young Carers – Feb 2005.
- Service & Resource Planning: Business Plan 2007/08 – 2010/11 - Service Area: Early Years and Family Support – OCC
- Staffordshire Health Scrutiny Committee - health services for vulnerable children (young carers) – March 2005.
- South & Vale Young Carers Project
 - Information booklet
 - “For Young Carers – Are You One? Not sure?”
 - Ideas for Schools
 - Evaluation – March 2007-12-18 Good Practice in Schools
 - Young carers News – July-Dec 2007-12-18”Young carers At School” Pack including DVD – 2007
- Surrey Young Carers website
- The Children's Society Include Project - Information for teachers and school staff - Supporting Pupils who are Young Carers - 2007
- The Princess Royal Trust for Carers: Young Carers' policy and website as set out below.
- Young Carers leaflet – Surrey County Council
- Youngminds.org.uk/young carers/
- Young Carers - Oxfordshire's Strategy for Children and Young People with Caring Responsibilities and their Families - 2005 – 2008
- Young Carers Project – North & West Oxfordshire – DVD “Young Carers – Good Days, Bad Days” - 2008
- Review of Year 1 of the Children & Young People's Plan – OCC – 2007

Websites

- <http://www.youngcarers.net/>
- http://women.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/women/families/article/2181920.ece
- <http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/>
- <http://www.oxfordshire.nhs.uk/carers.asp>
- <http://www.coolyoungcarerscare.com>
- <http://www.carers.org/>
- <http://www.youngcarer.com>

ANNEX 8

Areas of legislation that have a bearing on Young Carers - (Collated By The Children's Society "Include" Project)

Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004

Children Act Legislation

The Children Act 2004 and guidance

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/strategy/guidance/>

The Children Act 2004 provides the legal underpinning for *Every Child Matters: Change for Children*

Every Child Matters: Change for Children

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/>

Children Act 1989

http://www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts1989/Ukpga_19890041_en_1.htm

Assessment

Common Assessment Framework

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/deliveringservices/caf/>

The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) for children and young people is also a key part of the strategy to shift the focus from dealing with the consequences of difficulties in children's lives to preventing things from going wrong in the first place. It is a nationally standardised approach to conducting an assessment of the additional needs of a child or young person and deciding how those needs should be met.

Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families Guidance

(Department of Health, 2000a)

http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidanceArticle/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4003256&chk=Fss1ka

Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995

Children Act 1989.

National Strategy for Carers

Carers (Equal Opportunities) Act 2004

<http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/practiceguides/carersguidance/about.asp>

- Fair Access to Care Services (FACS) guidance, ensure that adults' services support

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/financialhelp/ema/index.cfm?SectionID=1>

Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995 Section 1

http://www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts1995/Ukpga_19950012_en_1.htm

The Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000

<http://www.carers.gov.uk/carersdisabledchildact2000.htm>
<http://www.carers.gov.uk/pdfs/practiceguidecarersparents.pdf>

Disabled Persons (Services and Consultation and Representation) Act 1986 http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si1988/Uksi_19880094_en_1.htm

Assessment Checklists and Guidance

Young Carers: Something to Think About (Department of Health, 1996)
SSI's Practice Guide to the Carers (Recognition of Services) Act 1995 checklist:

- Listen to the child or young person and respect their views.
- Give time and privacy to children who may need this in order to talk about their situation.
- Acknowledge that this is the way the family copes with disability or illness.
- Acknowledge parents' strengths.
- Beware of undermining parenting capacity.
- Consider what is needed to assist the parent in her/his parenting role.
- Consider the needs of the child(ren) arising from caring responsibilities.
- Consider whether the caring responsibilities are restricting the child's ability to benefit from their education.
- Consider whether the child's emotional and social development are being impaired.
- Remember children must be allowed to be children.
- Provide information on the full range of relevant support services, young carers' groups and contact points for further advice or information on specific issues.

Rights and Inclusion

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

<http://www.unicef.org/crc/crc.htm>

Department for Education and Skills guidance on behaviour and school attendance

- www.dfes.gov.uk/behaviourandattendance

- www.dfes.gov.uk/schoolattendance.

Further advice about young carers is available at
www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/y/youngcarers/

Children missing education

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/ISA/sharing_Assessment/cme.cfm

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA)

www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1995/1995050.htm - 22k

Human Rights Act 1998

<http://www.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts1998/19980042.htm>

The Data Protection Act 1998

<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts1998/19980029.htm>

Health

National Health Service (NHS) and Community Care Act 1990

http://www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/acts/acts1990/Ukpga_19900019_en_1.htm

National Service Framework for children, young people and maternity services

(Department of Health, 2004)

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/HealthAndSocialCareTopics/ChildrenServices/ChildrenServicesInformation/fs/en>

Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 Section 2

National Service Framework for Mental Health 1999

http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidanceArticle/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4009598&chk=jmAMLk

Fair Access to Care Services Practice Guidance

(Department of Health, 2002)

http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidanceArticle/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4009653&chk=nadbwl

Guidance on Recognition

Caring About Carers. The National Strategy for Carers 1999

<http://www.carers.gov.uk/>

Parental Support

The Direct Payments guidance

(Department of Health, 2002)

http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationPolicyAndGuidance/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidanceArticle/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4096246&chk=PGxkiA

Health and Social Care Act 2001 (section 58) amending for Children Act 1989, section 17 re: Direct payments in respect of children

<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2001/10015--g.htm>

(Social Services Inspectorate Department of Health, 2000b)

http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsInspectionReports/PublicationsInspectionReportsArticle/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=4005103&chk=hgrdpJ

Valuing People: A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century 7.40 (White Paper, March 2001) <http://www.archive.official-documents.co.uk/document/cm50/5086/5086.pdf>

The inspection of services for people with learning disabilities (Inspection Standards, Department of Health, 2001)

www.doh.gov.uk/pdfs/stand35.pdf

Section 189(1) of the Housing Act 1996

<http://www.opsi.gov.uk/ACTS/acts1996/96052-ac.htm>

Documents giving further guidance on legislation relating to young carers are available from:

Social Services Inspectorate (1995) Young carers: something to think about

<http://www.carersinformation.org.uk/showdoc.ihtml?id=421&zz>

Social Services Inspectorate (1996)- Young Carers Making A Start –

<http://www.carersuk.org/Policyandpractice/Research/yceduc.pdf>

contains practical guidance on assessments

The Health and Well-being of Young Carers

<http://www.scie.org.uk/publications/briefings/briefing11/index.asp>

Helping parents with a learning disability in their parenting role

<http://www.elsc.org.uk/briefings/briefing13/index.asp>

Helping parents with a physical disability or impairment in their parenting role

<http://www.elsc.org.uk/briefings/briefing14/index.htm>

Parenting capacity and substance misuse

<http://www.elsc.org.uk/briefings/briefing06/index.htm>

scrutiny REVIEW OF YOUNG CARERS

The Review set out:

- To identify how the County Council (and its partners) may empower young carers (YCs) to approach the authority for help (there is a fear that they do not because conversely, they often think that they may be taken into care).
- To achieve a change in understanding and perception around young carers.
- To identify the gaps between provision, need/demand and availability of services.
- To examine the social/economic/educational and health impacts of the issue.

The Children's Services Committee believes that the report demonstrates that these aims have been achieved.

A considerable amount of secondary research and analysis took place throughout the Review. Primary evidence gathering involved Member attendance at the Children's Services Network Seminar on Young Carers and attendance at the Annual Oxfordshire Carers Forum on the 14th November.

Members visited Gloucestershire Young Carers, the Oxford City, South & Vale (twice) and North & West Young Carers' Projects – taking the opportunity to talk to young carers; Hertfordshire Young Carers, the Children's Society and the Oxfordshire PCT. The Review Group also met representatives of the North & West Project here at County Hall, as well as taking the opportunity to view a DVD produced by its young carers. The views of school professionals were also canvassed.

The following framework of questions was applied to visits, interviews and the analysis of evidence undertaken by the Review Group, as it neatly encapsulates the aims of the work.

- How well does the authority do at identifying young carers?
- What are the main obstacles to young carers accessing support?
- What are the main disadvantages young carers experience that affect their health and well being outcomes?
- How should we assess needs, plans and co-ordinate services for young carers?
- How should we design effective IAG and support services for young carers?
- What are the best options for improving service outcomes?

This final report sets out the key themes, areas of evidence, analysis and recommendations.

Among the themes and ideas that the Committee would like to convey strongly – in some instances through recommendations, are:

- The need for a single point of contact in schools for young carers; a person who can give time, space etc to them.
- A focus in the report on the “Every Child Matters” agenda.
- The importance of and hence recommendations around partnership working – how and who identifies young carers? Who takes the lead?
- A recommendation about on the one hand, the legal duty to assess and on the other, the absence of any obligation to provide for the assessed need – and the need, possibly, for lobbying govt.
- A pig push in the review on the connection between young carers and the County Council’s focus on educational attainment and economic well-being. There is no measure of attainment among young carers (whereas, say, there is among cared for children). The Cabinet should be aware that improving the position of young carers may have an impact on the overall attainment statistics and on economic well-being, as we need to look at young carers destinations later on – eg further and higher education.
- Promoting the Children’s Society model in the Review, (the Key Principles and The Pathway) and finding out how Oxfordshire can fit the gaps between need and provision identified there.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to endorse these principles (from the Young Carers Festival 2006 supported by the Children’s Society, and (where appropriate) urges School Governing Bodies to adhere to them:

Oxfordshire County Council/schools should:

- 1. Recognise that the responsibility as a Young Carer (YC) can affect education and school work;**
- 2. Find out about them, what they need and how they are not like other students;**
- 3. Take time to find out about individual problems at home. Sometimes YCs are too embarrassed to say themselves;**
- 4. Not automatically punish YCs if they are late. Sometimes this can’t be helped because they are helping out at home;**
- 5. Provide more support such as lunchtime drop ins and homework clubs;**
- 6. Be flexible – giving more time and help to do homework or coursework;**
- 7. Include information about YC and disability issues in Personal, Social Health & Sex Education lessons;**
- 8. Let YCs phone parents to see if they are OK;**
- 9. Make sure that there is a clear and up to date community notice board that has support info for YC and where else**

- they can get help in the community;
10. Ensure teachers are offered training on YC and disability issues both at university and on inset days.

The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED:

1. That Annex 2 to the Review is sent to all schools and linked to the Young Carers Strategy.
2. That Oxfordshire's revised 2008 -11 Young Carers' Strategy when issued, is widely disseminated and adhered to and that the specific educational needs of young carers are addressed.
3. That the principle of a discreet single point of contact in schools is accepted and that each school in Oxfordshire should be advised to nominate a single contact member of staff with responsibility for identifying and supporting young carers and that means, such as a "Toolkit" or School Guidance pack should ensure that training, internet accessible material etc are in place to assist them in this role;
4. That a guide/protocol is developed for schools, modeled on the practices elsewhere including Gloucestershire and the Children's Society;
5. That given the rural nature of Oxfordshire and that many Young Carers have no access to rural transport, resources are made available to ensure that YCs are able to access support services;
6. That with specific reference to the dichotomy in the legislative position referred to in paragraph 49, to lobby Central Government via the Local Government Association to consider a review of legislative requirements and resources around assessments for young carers;
7. To consider the priority accorded by the Council to young carers; does it aspire to provide better identification of, support for and resources for young carers to make Oxfordshire the leader among its peers?
8. That based on the Oxfordshire PCT's experience, to work more closely with GPs to identify previously unidentified Young Carers and ensure that they and their families receive the appropriate support;
9. To explore the benefits of different staffing models for YCs such as in Hertfordshire, where they have 4 Professional

Assistants for YC's centrally based and working on a locality basis, in Children, Schools and Families (the equivalent in Oxfordshire being the CYP&F Directorate);

10. To:

- (a) endorse in principle and enable the Children's Society (by arranging a formal event), to launch the Key Principles and the Whole Family Pathway within Oxfordshire, and that both are adopted, the latter as a tool for practitioners working with YCs;**
- (b) bid to become one of the authorities involved in The Children's Society's roll out of the development of the Key Principles of Practice – Guidance for Practitioners and the Whole-Family Pathway;**
- (c) endorse the roll out of development to local authorities;**

11. To consider in detail the key features of the Children's Society work as described in this evidence and in the publications listed in the bibliography, as good strategy and practice that the County Council should wish to adhere to;

12. That the Review Group RECOMMENDS joint working protocols between adult and children's services (alongside the Schools protocol referred to earlier) for Oxfordshire;

13. It is desirable to achieve a link up of all the direct and indirect funding streams available on behalf of YCs, especially support from Adult Services; this is what the Children's Society seeks to do and on a local basis this is RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet from the Review;

14. That following the example of Nottinghamshire, a "critical friend", likely to be The Children's Society, is invited to evaluate the progress in implementing the new Young Carers Strategy and the impact of the initiatives recommended by this Review, in two years time.

Scrutiny Tracking Control Sheet

Title:	Young Carers	Ref:	CH015
Parent Committee:	Scrutiny Committee		
Date Started:	September 2007	Date Completed:	July 2008
Members:	Cllrs Fitzgerald O'Connor, Viney, David Turner and Mr Jackson	Scrutiny Officer:	Julian Hehir
Tracking Member(s)	Cllr David Turner	Directorate Contact:	Hannah Farncombe//Deborah Parkhouse

<p>COMPOSITE RECOMMENDATIONS - numbered 1-10</p>	<p>The Cabinet was RECOMMENDED to endorse these principles (from the Young Carers Festival 2006 supported by the Children's Society, and (where appropriate) urges School Governing Bodies to adhere to them:</p> <p>Oxfordshire County Council/schools should:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognise that the responsibility as a Young Carer (YC) can affect education and school work; 2. Find out about them, what they need and how they are not like other students; 3. Take time to find out about individual problems at home. Sometimes young carers are too embarrassed to say themselves 4. Not automatically punish young carers if they are late. Sometimes this can't be helped because they are helping out at home 5. Provide more support such as lunchtime drop ins and homework clubs 6. Be flexible – giving more time and help to do homework or coursework 7. Include information about young carers and disability issues in Personal, Social Health & Sex Education lessons 8. Let young carers phone parents to see if they are OK 9. Make sure that there is a clear and up to date community notice board that has support info for young carers and where else they can get help in the community; 10. Ensure teachers are offered training on young carers and disability issues both at university and on inset days.
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<p>Cabinet response – July 15th 2008</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agreed: our work with schools will continue to include the provision of advice, support and challenge, and will continue to focus on identifying young carers as a vulnerable group. 2. Agreed: our work with schools must continue to be informed by the views and experiences of young carers themselves. 3. Agreed: but we are mindful of the increasing range of demands placed on schools all the time, and we need to work with schools to build up the available non-teaching support available for vulnerable groups such as young carers. 4. Agreed: schools must be sensitive to the particular challenges faced by some young carers. We will ensure they get the information they need to do this better. 5. Agreed: Young carers as a vulnerable group need to be able to access and benefit from the increasingly wide range of services on offer as schools develop their Extended Services in Oxfordshire. 6. Agreed: see answers above. 7. There are many demands within the PSHE curriculum: we will, through our Healthy Schools programme, review the coverage afforded to young carers and disability issues. 8. This is a complicated issue for schools. Through effective identification of a young carer and engagement with that young person, agreement can be reached about how to allow the YC to make contact with parents. 9. Agreed: again, we will advise schools. 10. There are many demands within the teacher training curriculum: we will, through our links with local training providers, review the coverage afforded to young carers and disability issues. 	<p style="text-align: right;">Next Review</p>
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Review 1 – August – Oct 2009	Possible Questions: What actions have occurred to progress these principles in Oxfordshire, given the Cabinet’s approval of them?	
	Progress report: Officers ensured that these points were embedded in the new young carers strategy – the school related points are being put into guidance and training which will be rolled out to all schools.	
Review 2		
Review 3		
REMAINING RECS 1-14 REC 1	That Annex 2 to the Review is sent to all schools and linked to the Young Carers Strategy.	
Cabinet – July 15 th 2008	Agreed: this will be appended to the revised strategy.	Next Review
Review 1 – August – Oct 2009	Questions: Was Annex 2 sent to all schools and linked?	
	Progress report: Officers ensured that the main principles covered in Annex 2 were embedded into the young carers strategy, particularly in the “enjoy and achieve” section. Officers will develop an action plan relating to the work needed in schools in spring 2010 – this will include specific focus on the points in Annex 2.	
Review 2		
Review 3		
REC 2	That Oxfordshire’s revised 2008 -11 Young Carers’ Strategy when issued, is widely disseminated and adhered to and that the specific educational needs of young carers are addressed.	
Cabinet – July 15 th 2008	Agreed.	Next Review
Review 1 – August – Oct 2009	Questions: Has the new strategy been issued now? Are the SEN	

	addressed?	
	Progress report: The Strategy (2008 – 2013) has been developed and widely disseminated – feedback has been very positive relating to the design and content of the document.	
Review 2		
Review 3		
REC 3	That the principle of a discreet single point of contact in schools is accepted and that each school in Oxfordshire should be advised to nominate a single contact member of staff with responsibility for identifying and supporting young carers and that means, such as a “Toolkit” or School Guidance pack should ensure that training, internet accessible material etc are in place to assist them in this role;	
Cabinet – July 15 th 2008	Response: Agreed; will be a key element in our revised 3 year strategy, but we can do no more than advise, challenge and support schools to adopt such an approach.	Next Review
Review 1 – August – Oct 2009	Questions: Were schools advised to nominate a single contact? What sort of feedback and progress has there been from and within schools? Progress report: The strategy was due to be sent out to all schools in September 2009 backed up by an article in Schools News. Officers will develop an action plan relating to the work needed in schools in Spring 2010.	
Review 2		
Review 3		
REC 4	That a guide/protocol is developed for schools, modelled on the practices elsewhere including Gloucestershire and the Children’s Society;	
Cabinet – July 15 th 2008	Response: Agreed. Pack produced by South and Vale Young Carers group, being “rolled out” county-wide.	Next Review
Review 1 – August – Oct 2009	Questions: Has the South and Vale pack been rolled out yet? If not,	

	<p>why hasn't it?</p> <p><u>Progress report:</u> This will form part of the action plan developed in Spring 2010. South and Vale teachers' pack on understanding young carers was sent to schools in the north and west of the county in 2008.</p>	
Review 2		
Review 3		
REC 5	That given the rural nature of Oxfordshire and that many Young Carers have no access to rural transport, resources are made available to ensure that Young Carers are able to access support services;	
Cabinet – July 15 th 2008	Response: Agreed: links with developing 14-19 and Extended Services developments: transport issues a constant challenge in Oxfordshire.	Next Review
Review 1 – August – Oct 2009	<p><u>Questions:</u> What progress has there been in developing these resources and links?</p> <p><u>Progress report:</u> Issues relating to the rural nature of Oxfordshire and transport needs are highlighted as challenges in the new strategy. Geographic 'reach' was also part of the service specification for the commissioning of the external young carers' services. Contracts have been awarded to organisations which are able to extend services to young carers in all areas of the county. These issues will be an ongoing challenge as the work with young carers develops.</p> <p><u>Further question:</u> Can some examples of the organisations and services be provided for the Committee?</p>	
Review 2		
Review 3		
REC 6	That with specific reference to the dichotomy in the legislative position referred to in paragraph 49, to lobby Central Government via the Local Government Association to consider a review of legislative requirements and resources around assessments for young carers;	
Cabinet – July 15 th 2008	Response: Agreed, so long as with new legal duties come adequate resources to discharge them.	Next Review

Review 1 – August – Oct 2009	<p>Questions: Was the LGA lobbied? If so, what outcomes can be reported now?</p>
	<p>Progress report: It is not clear whether this recommendation has been put into effect. CYP&F will check and update the committee.</p>
Review 2	
Review 3	
REC 7	To consider the priority accorded by the Council to young carers; does it aspire to provide better identification of, support for and resources for young carers to make Oxfordshire the leader among its peers?
Cabinet – July 15 th 2008	<p>Response: Three-fold investment in Young Carer services illustrates the Council's commitment to this group. It is within mainstream and universal services that the greatest progress can be made.</p> <p>Total Carers Support Grant share for Young Carers for 2008/09 is £463,026. We would expect this (plus inflation) for 2009/10. The Grant is part of the Area Based Grant. In addition to CSG In addition, we are contributing £37,906 per annum to 2011 from the old Children's Fund and £35,000 via Connexions for a Personal Advisor post within the Young Carers project.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Next Review</p>
Review 1 – August – Oct 2009	<p>Questions: What support and progress has been evident around these principles during the last year?</p>
	<p>Progress report: Adjustments to the proposed use of the Area Based Grant linked to Aiming High for Disabled Children have resulted in an approved budget of £370,000 pa for two years to begin to implement the Young Carers Strategy. This includes £147,000 from the ABG (Carers Support Grant and former Children's Fund).</p> <p>Officers are committed to developing the work that the county does relating to identifying and supporting young carers and their families. It is through the development of this area of work that we hope to have a high national presence for good practice and innovation.</p> <p>The Young Carers Strategy has received praise from Spurgeons, a national children's charity, which was inspired to tender for an Oxfordshire contract as a result.</p>

	Further question: It would appear that the grant has reduced in 2009/10. Can this be clarified?	
Review 2		
Review 3		
REC 8	That based on the Oxfordshire PCT's experience, to work more closely with GPs to identify previously unidentified Young Carers and ensure that they and their families receive the appropriate support.	
Cabinet – July 15 th 2008	Response: Agreed, via our strong links to the PCT. It is clear that all carers' issues are an increasing PCT priority.	Next Review
Review 1 – August – Oct 2009	Questions: Can we have a progress report on closer work with the PCT and GP's in particular? Progress report: Officers have worked closely with the PCT to revise the GP protocol relating to identifying and supporting young carers; training for GP's about young carers was being planned during September 2009.	
Review 2		
Review 3		
REC 9	To explore the benefits of different staffing models for young carers such as in Hertfordshire, including 4 Professional Assistants for young carers centrally based and working on a locality basis, in Children, Schools and Families (the equivalent in Oxfordshire being the CYP&F Directorate).	
Cabinet – July 15 th 2008	Response: agreed: will be explored as part of the revised 3 year planning and commissioning strategy.	Next Review
Review 1 – August – Oct 2009	Questions: Have any new staffing models been explored? We have assumed that they have because the service has just gone through a new commissioning process and has since been re-structured. Progress report: Young Carers Oxfordshire County Council casework service has been planned to make best use of the available resources taking into account the benefits of various models of service delivery. Recruitment of three YC Support Workers and a p/t development worker was taking place during September 2009.	
Review 2		

Review 3	
REC 10	To: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) endorse in principle and enable the Children’s Society (by arranging a formal event), to launch the Key Principles and the Whole Family Pathway within Oxfordshire, and that both are adopted, the latter as a tool for practitioners working with young carers; (b) bid to become one of the authorities involved in The Children’s Society’s roll out of the development of the Key Principles of Practice – Guidance for Practitioners and the Whole-Family Pathway; (c) endorse the roll out of development to local authorities;
Cabinet – July 15 th 2008	<p>All agreed: We know there is more work to be done in relation to our “whole family working” strategy, but there is now considerable momentum and commitment to making this happen, and we will work with the Children’s Society to pursue this.</p>
	Next Review
Review 1 – August – Oct 2009	<p>Questions: Are the Children’s Society being asked or have they been asked, to launch the “Key Principles” here? Has the bid been made (b)? If these recommendations have not been implemented yet what progress can be reported?</p> <p>Progress report: Key principles are embedded into the Young Carers Strategy and seen as the basis for all work developed in this area. Officers are planning joint training in Oxford with the Children’s Society relating to young carers from asylum seeking families.</p> <p>Officers have attended presentation and training events relating to the work that the Children’s Society is developing with local authorities. An application to be part of the project was not made as we were not in the desired geographical location.</p>
Review 2	
Review 3	
REC 11	To consider in detail the key features of the Children’s Society work as described in this evidence and in the publications listed in the bibliography, as good strategy and practice that the County Council

	should wish to adhere to	
Cabinet – July 15th 2008	Our first strategy was itself commended and adopted by the Princess Royal Trust for Carers as a “best practice” example. We will seek to maintain the same high standards with the revision, using The Children’s Society materials.	
		Next Review
Review 1 – August – Oct 2009	Questions: There are no questions as we were commending good practice to adhere to.	
	Progress report: The new strategy is finished and feedback is positive from a wide range of Oxfordshire agencies and organisations.	
Review 2		
Review 3		
REC 12	That the Review Group RECOMMENDS joint working protocols between adult and children’s services (alongside the Schools protocol referred to earlier) for Oxfordshire.	
Cabinet – July 15th 2008	Agreed: A joint “Whole Family Working” protocol is already in place and operating, and staff are being trained in the issues and in the use of the protocol.	
		Next Review
Review 1 – August – Oct 2009	Questions: What progress is there to report on the training in the use of the protocol etc?	
	Progress report The protocol is in place and training has been undertaken and is planned to continue into the autumn.	
Review 2		
Review 3		
REC 13	It is desirable to achieve a link up of all the resources available on behalf of young carers, especially support from Adult Services; this is what the Children’s Society seeks to do and on a local basis this is RECOMMENDED to the Cabinet from the Review.	
Cabinet – July 15th 2008	Agreed: Work is ongoing across Children’s and Adult Services, and with the PCT and provider trusts precisely to better join service delivery up.	
		Next Review

<p>Review 1 – August – Oct 2009</p>	<p>Questions: Noted.</p> <p>Progress report Officers are working closely with all partners to develop this area of work – links with adult social care are good and services to support young adult carers aged 16 – 25 years are being developed jointly.</p>
<p>Review 2</p>	
<p>Review 3</p>	
<p>REC 14</p>	<p>That following the example of Nottinghamshire, a “critical friend”, likely to be The Children’s Society, is invited to evaluate the progress in implementing the new Young Carers Strategy and the impact of the initiatives recommended by this Review, in two years time</p>
<p>Cabinet – July 15th 2008</p>	<p>Agreed: we will look into the “critical friend” model, as well as reporting on progress back to Scrutiny.</p> <p>Note:</p> <p>Our strategy will address the issues emerging in the national Carers’ Strategy:</p> <p>Support for young carers needs to be centred on the family and the person they care for, but it must also make sure that young carers do not miss out on educational and other opportunities. In total, the Strategy contains measures worth £6m aimed at supporting young carers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action to build effective joined-up support around the family and the person cared for and to shift systems of support towards active prevention. • An extended programme of training on whole-family working for staff in local services. • Funding to embed support and guidance for young carers through the Healthy Schools Programme. <i>This should ensure staff have the resources they need.</i> • Funding for awareness-raising across schools and other children’s settings. • Research on what sort of project-based support works best for young carers. • Materials for GPs and hospital discharge teams to build awareness and skills in dealing with young carers.

	<p>Throughout the remainder of 2008/9, a new Young Carers' Strategy is being developed with the participation of young carers and the involvement of their parents and professional stakeholders. It will prioritise according to what young carers tell us they need. However, it will include commissioning priorities that implement the decisions of Cabinet based on the recommendations of the scrutiny review. The new strategy will be designed to fit within a 'Think Family' ie. whole family support framework, so that young carers' needs are not seen in isolation from the needs of their parents and siblings.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the predicted increase in young carers' share of the Area Based Grant will be sufficient for our needs in the short and medium term. However, it is essential that the Public Service Board confirms that CYP&F should receive 20% of the Carers' money, and that CYP&F continue in its commitment to use it to fund young carers' services.</p>	
<p>Review 1 – August – Oct 2009</p>	<p>Questions: Can it be confirmed that the Children's Society will be invited to evaluate the progress in implementing the new Young Carers Strategy and the impact of the initiatives recommended by this Review, in two years time?</p> <p>Progress report PRTC – Princess Royal Trust for Carers – have been approached to request that they will act as Oxfordshire's critical friend.</p> <p>Further question: When was the PRTC approached (instead of the Children's Society and why?) When is the PRTC expected to evaluate progress with the strategy?</p>	
<p>Review 2</p>		
<p>Review 3</p>		

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