

THURROCK CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP



THE CHILDREN'S PLAN 2006-07

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Introduction and Vision Statement

Vision Statement

1. Thurrock's Services for children & young people will improve their outcomes by working in partnership, with all relevant agencies, to ensure:
 - An effective approach to keeping children and young people safe by protecting them from harm, neglect and ill-health within the immediate environment in which they live
 - Any necessary intervention is appropriate to the need and speedy in action
 - Children and young people, with their families, are able to benefit from and contribute to living in a safe and healthy neighbourhood
 - Children and young people can access high quality learning and leisure activities and make a fulfilling start to their adult lives

Introduction

2. On 15th November 2004 the Children Act 2004 received Royal Assent. This Act, combined with policy developed in Every Child Matters and the National Services Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services, provided the legislative foundation and framework for "whole system" reform. This reform requires and enables Local Authorities, with their partners to develop more effective and accessible services focused around the needs of children, young people and their families.

3. This plan provides the strategic framework for how the statutory agencies working with the voluntary and community sectors will meet the requirements of the Children Act. A partnership structure is attached as Appendix 1. It sets the context within which the relevant agencies and partners will work incorporating objectives within existing plans. In developing this plan the Children & Young People's Board had a number of building blocks.

Firstly,

Thurrock's Community Strategy.

4. The Children's Plan will meet the objectives of the strategic themes within this strategy.

- Creating an Aspirational Community
- Building a Safe and Secure Environment
- An economically successful place and community
- An inclusive, healthy & active community

The community strategy is currently under review with a revised strategy to be published in the autumn of 2006

Secondly,

Thurrock Young People's Entitlement Statement,

5. This was generated after consultation with young people in Thurrock and provides a local definition of each of the Every Child Matters five outcomes (see a summary at Appendix 2).

Thirdly,

Feedback from the consultation.

6. This highlighted a number of services that need to be secured if the outcomes are to be achieved:

- Accessible leisure and recreation facilities (things to do, places to go)
- Parenting support and information on available services (including healthcare)
- Address all forms of bullying in schools and in the community
- Vocational opportunities for 14-16 year olds, including support and routes into work for disabled children and young people, and those with complex needs.
- Counselling, sexual violence counselling, family mediation and mental health services
- Promotion of diet and exercise

- Safer streets and play areas

7. This plan builds upon these three building blocks and identifies the key strands, work streams and levels of activity. The levels at which the plan will be delivered were identified at the start of the planning process as a result of looking at the partners' priorities. They are:

Community level:

8. All children and young people will live in child friendly and mutually respectful communities where they can:

- Feel safe, are valued and listened to
- Live and participate in communities where everyone is included and all take responsibility for their actions
- Contribute to a healthy, thriving community

Family level:

9. We will provide appropriate and accessible support and information to parents and carers to guide and support them to bring up their children so that:

- Children can grow and develop within a healthy and supportive environment and reach their full potential
- Most children and young people get their needs met through all available universal services, well supported by services which focus on their specific needs when required

Achievement level:

10. We will ensure all children and young people are provided with a range of opportunities to make inspiring choices and secure positive life chances so that:

- Children and young people can reach their full potential educationally and within society

Vulnerable & Individual Families level:

11. We will provide the most appropriate support for children, young people and their families at the time in their lives when they need it:

- There will be swift and easy access to services, which will be centred on the needs of children, young people and their families

Significant future developments in Thurrock

12. There will be a number of significant developments in Thurrock during 2006/7 which lead to this plan being a 1 year transitional plan which will be developed into a full three year plan during 2006/7. These developments include:
 - The Thurrock and Thames Gateway Development Corporation
 - Revision of the Community Strategy (expected Autumn 2006)
 - Re-configuration of PCT's in Essex (expected implementation October 2006)
 - The development of the first public health report dedicated to children and young people due to be published early in 2007
 - The national reorganisation of police forces
 - Development of Thurrock's first Local Area Agreement (expected Autumn 2006)
13. The Local Area Agreement in particular offers a framework for all public sector bodies to align their funding streams and service activities against an overall theme of 'family engagement'. This will present a significant opportunity to bring about some substantial improvements for children and young people through an intergenerational approach across the community.
14. The Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP), the predecessor of the Children & Young People's Board has made good progress in a number of areas:
 - Needs analysis (Annual Performance Assessment report December 2005)
 - Meeting 60% of the targets within the Local Public Service Agreement 1. These focussed on raising the aspirations of children and young people
 - Developing and evaluating a number of multi-agency projects (including those in the voluntary sector) in localities across Thurrock
15. This plan is underpinned by a Technical Book available electronically. This contains the full data sets on which the priorities and objectives within the plan have been based.

Local Context

16. In setting out the contents of this plan we have built on a substantial body of work that has already been completed in the borough which has identified existing need, mapped current resources and identified barriers and the key areas of development. These include:
 - External evaluations (APA; CSCI and Ofsted reports);
 - Data analysis;
 - Local surveys of young people and other stakeholders Performance Assessment Framework, Best Value, attainment and other key performance indicators

- Emerging priorities work from within the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) age-based planning groups
- Priorities from existing plans such as the Teenage Pregnancy Plan, the Substance Misuse Plan, the Behaviour Support Plan etc

Significant Improvements

17. The plan is also constructed on a baseline of significant improvements in a number of key areas, these are:

Health Improvements:

18. Improvements in Health care include:

- Significant reductions in teenage pregnancy (down by 30% in 2004)
- Improvements in the Community Mothers programme 'Breast Feeding Development' project
 - 10 days 24%- 37%
 - 6 weeks 16%- 21%
 - 4 months 12%-15%
- Implementation of the 'Skilled for Health' project. Providing health literacy programmes for marginalised families
- The appointment of a specialist health visitor for children with additional needs
- Thurrock are to host a specialist service screening babies for Sickle cell and Thalassaemia disease

Social Care Improvements:

19. Children's social care services were awarded 3 star status by CSCI in October 2005 and were judged to be 'serving most people well with excellent prospects for improvement'. Particular improvements have been made in:

- Outcomes for children looked after especially in relation to health, placement stability, participation and adoption
- Services to young people delivered in partnership, with particular success in the Teenage Pregnancy work
- Child protection performance with all Key Performance Indicators in the top category
- Good Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAHMS) commissioning developments including formation of a Primary Mental Health Care team
- Improvements in outcomes for girls and young women who have experienced sexual violence as evidenced by evaluations completed by beneficiaries

Education improvements:

20. The LEA was judged to be 'effective' in the 2005 inspection

- Improved secondary attendance 2004-05 now in line with national attendance levels for secondary schools
- Support for Early Years identified as a strength of the LEA in the 2005 inspection
- Rates of improvement more than double the national average in Mathematics and English at the end of key stage 2 (when pupils are eleven)
- Intervention in 'schools causing' concern was identified as a strength the LEA inspection of 2005
- The authority's support for 11-14 year olds (key stage 3) was identified as a strength in the Ofsted inspection 2005
- Thurrock is in the second quartile for the percentage of young people who gained 5 or more GCSEs (A*-G) and in the top 25 authorities nationally for the percentage of young people who gained 1 or more GCSEs A*-G

Potential Barriers to Future Improvement

21. Barrier to improvement identified in the plan:

- The perceptions of children and young people that they are not safe in a number of places (including 45% of young women)
- Their belief that although more steps are taken to listen to them young people cannot yet see the impact of what is heard on the redesign of services
- The lack of relevant and accessible support and guidance to young people and their parents and carers;
- The low level of attendance at schools (the major universal service) and the limited understanding of the breadth of reasons for it;
- The support for all children to enable them to make good progress throughout their primary schools
- The lack of programmes to support the attainment and cultural needs of the increasing number of young people from black and minority ethnic groups
- The impact of bullying behaviours including sexual bullying (the most commonly reported form of bullying amongst girls and young women)
- The limited range of opportunities young people have to choose from a range of pathways to gain qualifications
- The lack of targeted support to help young people to choose to stay on in education post 16 and to continue the course to the end
- The limited understanding of the long term impact of incidents of sexual violence on health outcomes (depression, self harm, suicide and teenage pregnancy)
- The lack of access to the range of activities and opportunities which young people wish to undertake in their spare time
- An increase in 'risk taking activities' by young people including engagement in crime
- The timescales in which children and young people can access Childhood and Adolescent Mental Health and SERRIC Services:
- The level and consistency of support which young people with learning disability have to help the transition to adult services
- Housing options for under 19 year olds unable to live at home

- The negative views held by some adults about children and young people
- The limited understanding of the diversity of voluntary sector agencies and the ways in which they can engage effectively in the delivery of services and strategic planning

Strategies to Deliver the Vision

22.

Six key strategies were identified through the consultation process. These will be implemented through this one year transition plan:

- Maintaining a tight focus on outcomes which will make a measurable difference to the lives of children and young people
- Targeting those outcomes where joint working will have major impact
- Establishing planning processes which focus on the four levels of delivery : community; families; achievement; vulnerable young people
- Apply the ways of working identified within the development process to all our activities:
 - Encourage participation and actively involve and seek the views of children, young people and their families, and keep them informed This will include the needs of specific groups
 - Look for new ways of working which ensure that the needs of children and young people are at the centre of what we do
 - Recognise and respond to Thurrock's diverse and changing communities
 - Reflect the best practice of the voluntary sector in delivering innovative and respectful services within the community
 - Work in a way that prevents children, young people, families and communities experiencing negative outcomes
- Establishing good governance which monitors and manages performance; creates trust and credibility with partners; develops an environment in which the partnerships can be effective; targets resources
- Making sure that people working with children and young people develop and are able to use the skills they need to make a difference

The Structure of the Plan



23. The structure of Thurrock's CYPSP adopted for the creation of the plan aligns to the model of children's trust development provided by the DfES. This model puts the outcomes for children and young people at the core of the structure.

Section 1: Achieving Positive Outcomes for Children, Young People and their Families in Thurrock.

24. The 'Every Child Matters' agenda sets out the five outcomes which are important if all children are to have a happy and safe childhood and if they are to pass successfully into adulthood. These outcomes are:
- To be healthy
 - To stay safe
 - To enjoy and achieve
 - To make a positive contribution, and
 - To achieve economic well-being
25. In Thurrock we are fully committed to these outcomes but also want to ensure that they are delivered in ways which make sense to and are relevant to the specific needs of children and young people in our communities. We have produced a "Young People's Entitlement Statement" which has been agreed by Thurrock Council (at Cabinet level), by Thurrock PCT and, most importantly, with input from young people themselves.
26. The Entitlement Statement sets out in more detail what the attainment of these outcomes will look like in Thurrock and defines specific aspirations that have been set for our children and young people. Key aspirations under each outcome are included below. Attached to each are some measurable but ambitious targets that will help drive our work forward.

Key Aspirations

Key Aspirations

Be Healthy

27. Parents, carers, children and young people will be supported in making healthy choices. Families will be encouraged to form good habits in eating, taking exercise and choosing not to smoke, take drugs or drink excessive alcohol.
28. We will modernise services within the health visiting and school nursing teams to deliver a service that further promotes well being and health of children and young people from pre birth to adulthood with a focus on early intervention, based on comprehensive assessment
29. We will improve the health of children and young people by increasing rates of immunisation to 90% by 2012.
30. **Special emphasis will be placed on providing clear, in-depth and mature information and advice on the risks of unsafe sex, drugs, alcohol and smoking.***
31. Working to promote personal safety and reducing risk-taking activities in young people by providing the opportunities for them to make informed choices.
32. Health services will continue to support the work of all outcome groups, (stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well being) as the actions underpin the healthy choices message and develops the good habits that are the foundation to a healthy lifestyle.
33. We will continue the positive work started by Sure Start in reducing admissions to A & E by promoting breastfeeding, thus reducing the incidence of gastro enteritis, promoting safety in the home and teaching parents management of minor illnesses
34. We will work with schools to support the healthy schools initiative and promote the provision of healthy meal and snack choices within the school day.
35. School health teams will work with children and young people to promote positive mental and physical health
36. The school health team will recruit a CAMHS and learning disability worker to work alongside school nurses, addressing the needs of those young people with mental health issues and also to facilitate the seamless transition into adulthood
37. Health Services will work collaboratively with children's centres to deliver services locally to pregnant women, babies, children and young people

Key Aspirations

Stay Safe

38. Parents, carers and families will be supported in providing safe homes and stability for young people. We will reduce the percentage of children looked after by 20% by 2010. A culture of mutual respect will be created and embedded.
39. **Positive relationships between adults and young people, and adults and adults, will be established.** * We will reduce the number of young people who are victims of crime by 25% by 2012.

Key Aspirations

Enjoy and Achieve

40. **Schools and colleges will place particular emphasis on ensuring all young people, of all abilities, receive every opportunity of attaining formal qualifications.** *
41. We will increase the numbers of young people gaining 5 A-G (or equivalent) at GCSE to 98% by 2012.

Key Aspirations

Make a Positive Contribution

42. **The 'youth voice' will be used to shape policy both formally and informally. More will be done to educate young people about the political process and their role with it.** *
43. We will increase the numbers of young people participating in the democratic process to 1000 by 2012.

Key Aspirations

Achieve Economic Well-Being

44. Schools, colleges and other agencies will provide young people with routes of progression which will eventually lead to them entering the world of work. They will be assisted in this by a sustained contribution from the business community.
45. We will reduce the percentage of young people not in education, employment or training by 2% by 2012.
46. **Young people will be supported to develop financial literacy and skills (budgeting their money, saving filling in tax forms etc).** *

** These aspirations are ones that have come directly from young people. We also know that for Thurrock's children and young people, Staying Safe and Being Healthy are their top priorities, and we will seek to prioritise these areas of work.*

Actions for 2006-07

47. This plan sets out the direction for children's services in Thurrock. In setting out this direction, we do so on the basis that each partner agency is directing its own core business to meet the five outcomes for children and families – much of the analysis of needs will be met by single agencies carrying out their core business to high standards. We also recognise that some key activities will be carried out under other partnerships, especially the Safer Thurrock Partnership.
48. We have not highlighted that activity in this Plan. Instead what we have focussed on are some key activities which:
- Require more than one agency to work together to deliver
 - Make a substantial contribution towards meeting needs and achieving the outcomes
 - Are likely to impact on more than one outcome
 - Are deliverable during the course of 2006-07

Be Healthy

49. By the end of March 2007 we will:
- Expand the capacity for children and young people to receive good quality nursing care in the home particularly for those with complex needs in order to reduce hospital admissions.
 - Milestone: increase the capacity of the existing children's nursing team by 2 experienced nurses July 2007
 - Have produced and begun delivering on a borough-wide parenting strategy.
 - Milestone: Baseline of current support for parents completed by October 2006
 - Develop Children's Centres as outlets for a variety of services, including access to midwifery and health visiting services
 - Milestone: 4 centres operating by Sept 06
 - Increase the uptake of immunisations, including neonatal BCG and adolescent MMR.
 - Milestone: All children living in Children's Centre areas to receive information on neonatal immunisations. PCT to provide information to all secondary schools on adolescent MMR – by October 2006
 - Promote breast feeding through investment in the Breast Feeding Support Programme.
 - Milestone: all mothers living in Children's Centre areas to receive information on the benefits of breastfeeding by March 2007.
 - Supporting children aged 5-13 to develop healthy relationships within home and the community.
 - Milestone: Incorporate into school nurse and health visitor planning by July 2006.

Be Healthy cont.

- Improved access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health services and SERRIC, especially for those with learning disabilities.
 - Milestone: Recruitment of the CAMHS Learning Disabilities Nurse by October 2006.
- Develop school based Health Services to support Healthy Schools Initiative.
 - Milestone: 50 schools accredited with Healthy Schools status by December 2006

Stay Safe

50.

The key responsibility for this outcome rests with Thurrock's Local Safeguarding Board. The key actions that have emerged from our needs analysis and that need to be acted upon during 2006-07 are:

- The provision of advice and guidance to parents and carers through the distribution of the Parenting Handbook. It will cover all key aspects of child development and advice on how to protect children from harm.
 - Milestone: Distributed to target audience of parents/carers and key voluntary sector agencies begin June 06
- The dissemination and implementation of the Assessment and Responses to Children System (ARCS) to improve early identification of and response to vulnerable children
 - Milestone – project groups currently implementing ARCS
 - Milestone: launch October 06
- Working with schools, families and voluntary sector groups to improve responses to bullying and developing anti-bullying procedures and support services which include reporting on all incidents of bullying (including sexual bullying) & action taken
 - Milestone: Conference: March 07
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the Safer Schools initiative in the Gateway Community College and investigate mainstreaming to other schools.
 - Milestone: Guidance published to schools Jan. 07
- Through the devolution of services into localities enabling earlier intervention and ease of access to services (including the voluntary sector)
 - Milestone: Move the Family Service Teams into the community October 06
- Road Accidents-coordinate existing cross agency initiatives to maximise impact
 - Milestone establish current baseline by geographic area and target high risk areas. October 06

Enjoy and Achieve

51. By the end of March 2007 we will:

- Further embed 'Birth to Three Matters' in all early years and child care settings enabling more children to access learning.
 - Milestone: 0-3 Development Officer to be appointed Sept 06
 - Milestone: Training delivered by Dec 06
- Improve education outcomes for all children but targeting schools with historic underperformance:
 - Milestone: Present a report recording these improvements on outcomes in July examinations to the Young People's Cabinet December 06
- Improve the performance of groups of young people vulnerable to underachievement e.g. boys and Children Looked After.
 - Milestone: Involvement of fathers in their child's education conference in June 06
 - Milestone: Additional staff appointed to working with looked after children March 06
- Implement the Plan to raise standards 2006-7
 - Milestone: Joint conference with the regional strategies June 2006
- Implement the 14-19 plan of the TASC 14-19 local planning group:
 - Milestone: online prospectus of accredited learning routes operational Sept. 06
- Transition at all levels (but focussing on disabled children and the link with adult services)
 - Milestone: transition coordinator appointed March 06
- Develop a range of extended learning opportunities and extended services across the school community in the borough
 - Milestone: Devolution of services and the establishment of services Sept 06
- Develop and implement an 'Attendance Strategy' to improve levels of attendance at both primary and secondary level
 - Milestone: Presented to Director's Briefing Sept. 06
- Develop appropriate responses to young people who have experienced sexual and other forms of bullying behaviour to enable them to access opportunities
 - Milestone- Publication of the bullying strategy Dec 06
- Develop and implement a 'Play Strategy' and access the £365k available to develop play facilities in the borough
 - Milestone: Launch Feb. 07

Enjoy and Achieve cont.

- Increase the number of 'places to go and things to do' for young people aged 13-19
 - Milestone: proposals from the Youth Cabinet October 2006
- Through the Disabled Children's Forum, we will ensure leisure facilities better meet the needs of children and young people with disabilities and their carers.
 - Milestone: Opening of remodelled Sunshine Centre. March 07

Make a Positive Contribution

52. By the end of March 2007 we will:

- Through the Life Long learning Strategy, develop a range of role models and mentors for young people
 - Milestone: 50% of schools have had a presentation on raising aspirations Sept 06
- The Children's Centres will devise strategies to increase the role of fathers and other male carers in their work
 - Milestone: Conference June 06
 - Milestone: Children's centre work begins Sept 06
- Publish a multi agency anti-bullying strategy which addresses all forms of bullying
 - Milestone: draft strategy produced Dec 06
- Develop the Youth Cabinet to become the focal point for young people's involvement in decision making
 - Milestone: protocols agreed at first meeting 15th March 2006
- Delegate to the Youth Cabinet a budget of £60k to invest in youth provision across the borough
 - Milestone: Recorded in the minutes of the first meeting of the Youth Cabinet 15th March 2006
- Improve the public perception of young people through the promotion of positive news stories
 - Milestone: proposal taken to Youth Cabinet Oct 06

Economic Well-Being

53. By the end of 2007 we will:
- Have made a major contribution to the development of the Local Area Agreement with a focus on intergenerational activities (to include the voluntary sector)
 - Milestone: Engagement Plan for Adults and Young People in intergenerational learning by September 06
 - Increase by 10% the provision of activities in the Trade School
 - Milestone: 3 programmes to 4 programmes March 07
 - Publish the directory of learning and vocational pathways 14-19 to broaden access to qualifications
 - Milestone: Directory to be live by September 06
 - Provide a Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP) Programme
 - Milestone: Increase numbers Young People accessing PAYP from 15 to 30 by March 06
 - Address the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training by giving easy and improved access to support services, including the voluntary sector) to raise achievement, self esteem and confidence
 - Milestone: Reduce young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) 8.5% by November 2007
54. The CYPSP planning groups will be developing robust action plans to deliver this first year of the plan at all four levels and ensure milestones are reached.

Section 2: Integrated Front-Line Delivery

55. The integration of services provided to children and their families is developing on a number of fronts. Ensuring that services to children are experienced as co-ordinated and delivered in ways and from locations that maximises likely take-up is a key element of our drive to develop more preventative services and services that are available early in the development of need.

Health Services

56. Thurrock health services are heading for some substantial changes in 2006 and beyond. Structurally this will be reflected in the reconfiguration of all the Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) in Essex – one effect of which will be that there is no longer a co-terminus with the local authority boundaries. At this stage the final outcome of this consultation is unknown. What is clear is that whatever the geographical boundaries of the PCT, there will be separation of its' commissioning and provider functions.
57. However, a plan is being developed within health that will radically alter the nature of health provision locally. The core element of this plan is a 'hub and spoke' model:
- The establishment of a new centre in the borough that will provide services currently only available in hospitals – e.g a full diagnostic service, a comprehensive child development centre and some emergency response provision. (the 'hub')
 - A series of smaller centres across the borough offering more locally accessible services including minor surgery, desk-top diagnosis and some elements of children's acute clinics. (the 'spokes')
 - In addition, the new children's centres will be developed as outlets for some primary health care – e.g. health visiting and midwifery

The Police

58. As part of the national reorganisation within the Police service, Essex Police are looking to make some changes to the nature of their service delivery. Again, these plans are still at the development stage but the essence of them is to provide more holistic services to local neighbourhoods and current plans are for Thurrock to be sub-divided into three areas served by the full range of Police services.

Local Authority Children's Services

59. A key feature of the Children, Education and Families Directorate is the work being undertaken to roll out the extended services agenda, the growth of children's centres and the devolution of services into neighbourhood localities. This work is driven by the following principles:
- That aligning the universal and specialist/targeted services is key to the delivery of the five 'Every Child Matters' outcomes if all children in Thurrock are to benefit
 - That there are some inherent benefits to the development of locality based services which are able to reflect the needs of their local communities

- That the demand for early intervention and prevention services require services which are both physically accessible and are offered in non-stigmatising ways
- That maintaining a focus on the safeguarding of children must be at the heart of these developments
- That the devolution of services into locality clusters is not the same as them being delegated to schools or groups of schools. That may develop, and may develop at a differential pace in different clusters but it is not the prime purpose of this work

Devolution of services

60. We are committed to devolving services to secure local delivery. This will be the preferred route unless there are compelling reasons for them not to be – this may be because there is an issue of economy of scale or the degree of specialisation is such that devolution is neither practical nor desirable. However, even in these circumstances we are committed to ensuring that those services are developed in an integrated manner and that referral processes between them and the devolved services are constructed to be as smooth and easy as possible.

61. Services in this category will include:

- Looked After Children – which already contain Health, Education and CAMHS services.
- Education Psychology, SEN Services and Disabled Children's Services. Developments in these areas are already underway – substantial elements of the SEN process and resources are to be delegated to local schools and there is to be a continued focus on the development of bases within local schools to meet the need of children who might otherwise need external services. Bases for visual and hearing impaired children, for speech and language and for mild learning difficulties already exist and during 2006-07 we will develop a primary and secondary base for those who might need residential provision.
- Targeted support to young people, whether through the Youth Services, Connexions or the Adolescent team. Further debate is required in this area – should these services be part of the devolution or held centrally, albeit in a more integrated and easily accessible way than currently.

Section 3: Integrated Processes

62. In Thurrock we are responding to the need to develop integrated processes through the development of "ARCS" – the Assessment and Response to Children System. This system captures the need to implement the Common Assessment Framework but does a lot more as well in defining the nature of the relationship that needs to exist between different services working with a child and his/her family.
63. ARCS is intended to:
- Share procedures, particularly around referral and assessment
 - Improve communication
 - Clarity around sharing of information (ISA)
 - Use of a common referral form, basic details format, chronology, consultation process
 - Implementation of the Common Assessment Framework, which identifies who is responsible for what
 - Agreed threshold of intervention, including criteria for referral to local Authority
64. This has been based on the following principles:
- A way of working, which encourages a stronger multi-disciplinary approach
 - Promoting a holistic approach to assessment
 - The co-ordination of all child welfare services to maximise across agency resources
 - Agencies to take responsibility for identifying & meeting needs of children
 - Values staff & their assessment skills
 - Supports the principle that children & families should be linked to services at the lowest point of contact with the family
65. This work, developed under the Area Child Protection Committee is due for implementation and dissemination across the borough during 2006. The guidance that is to be issued to staff from across the inter-agency network includes details on the Common Assessment Framework (templates, procedures, flow charts etc); how and when to make a referral; a glossary of language and terms and most importantly threshold levels and guidance on consent and confidentiality.
66. A number of projects already operational in the borough are already using the ARCS and the CAF and we shall be learning from their experiences as we disseminate more widely. These projects include the Grays Project (developed around a number of local primary schools and other agencies to improve service delivery to vulnerable children) and the SAFFS project run by Edison again within a cluster of local schools again aimed at offering more comprehensive responses to vulnerable children as soon as their needs are identified.

67. The ARCS will sit alongside the inter-agency child protection procedures as the key processes for agencies working with each other in providing services to vulnerable children and their families. During the course of 2006, the Local Safeguarding Children's Board will publish new child protection procedures which update the existing ones in two important ways:
- It reflects the contents of the new 'Working Together' national guidance
 - It has been developed jointly with Essex and Southend to ensure a commonality of process especially for those agencies that act across local authority boundaries

Section 4: Integrated Strategies

68. Finally, it is important to realise that not all the development work for children and their families will be directly carried out within the CYPSP – the agenda is too broad and too complex for that. The Local Safeguarding Children's Board clearly has a central role to play and Thurrock's Local Strategic Partnership is fed by four key partnerships – as well as the CYPSP, there is the Safer Thurrock Partnership, the Healthy Communities Executive and the Sustainable Communities Partnership Board. The Safer Thurrock Partnership will for example take a leading role in work to reduce the levels of domestic abuse and the extent to which children are victims of crime and the Healthy Thurrock Executive will take a lead role in developing health promotion activities. In addition we will work closely with the voluntary sector to plan and develop robust and effective delivery programmes

Local Safeguarding Children's Board

69. Thurrock's LSCB had its first meeting in December 2005. Currently chaired by the Director of Children's Services, it has set as its remit:
- Work together with statutory and other agencies (including the voluntary sector to co-ordinate work and develop policies and procedures to safeguard and promote the welfare of Thurrock children as identified in the Children Act 2004 and described in the LSCB Functions below.
 - Take the lead role in delivering the 'Stay Safe' outcome for children and young people as set out in the government publication Every Child Matters – the aims of which are:
 - Safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation
 - Safe from accidental injury and death
 - Safe from bullying and discrimination
 - Safe from crime and anti-social behaviour in and out of school
 - Have security, stability and are cared for.
 - Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Board partners to implement improvements in working practices to better safeguard and promote the welfare of Thurrock children.
 - Provide regular reports and information on the work of the Board to the Children and Young People Partnership Board.
 - Identify and supply resources required to fulfil the functions of the LSCB, and to ensure the financial stability of the LSCB.

70. A number of core functions have been identified in the new Draft of Working Together to Safeguard Children (2005), including the development of policies and procedures in relation to:
- Action to be taken where there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare, including thresholds for intervention
 - Training of persons who work with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children
 - Recruitment and supervision of persons who work with children
 - Investigation of allegations concerning persons working with children
 - Safety and welfare of children who are privately fostered
 - Co-operation with neighbouring children's services authorities and their Board partners
71. For Thurrock we will also aim to:
- Ensure that the views of the children and young people of Thurrock help to shape the work of the Board
 - Ensure that the views and expertise of the voluntary sector are taken into account when developing strategy
 - Maintain and review interagency guidelines on child protection procedures in line with Government, and the Thurrock LSCB's expectations
 - Improve awareness and understanding of child protection amongst all professionals working with children in Thurrock
 - Raise the awareness of these issues amongst the community of Thurrock
 - Ensure that effective training relating to the safeguarding of children is devised, delivered and reviewed
 - Ensure that significant issues arising from serious case reviews (Part 8 Working Together guidance 1999) either locally or nationally are reviewed and appropriate measures taken to improve the safety of Thurrock children and young people
 - Ensure that the work of the Board reflects the diversity of the Thurrock community
 - Ensure that membership of the Board and its sub-committees possess the relevant authority and expertise to exercise its duties in keeping Thurrock children safe
 - Ensure that each Partner agency implements the decisions and actions recommended by the Board and evaluates the effectiveness of implementation
72. Thurrock LSCB is informed by the work of an Officers Group itself made up of a number of sub-groups – Safer relationships, ARCS (see above), Monitoring, Community Safety and Training.

Safer Thurrock Partnership (STP)

73. The STP delivers Thurrock's crime and disorder strategy and as such is central to the overall provision of services to children and their families in the borough. This will ensure that Thurrock is a community free from crime and where its residents are free from the

fear of crime is key to enabling children to grow and develop to their full potential. We know some young people are involved in crime and anti-social behaviour – we also know that many more young people are victims of crime and that their fear of crime is as powerful if not more so than others in the community.

74. Two elements of STP in particular are relevant to children and young people.

The Domestic Abuse Delivery Group

75. key objectives are:

- To prioritise the on-going targeting of domestic abuse which accounts for 20% of violent crime offences
- To reduce the level of repeat victimisation
- To ensure that agency policies have regard to domestic abuse
- To collate data on domestic abuse and share information across all agencies
- To promote awareness of domestic abuse amongst staff in all agencies
- To encourage the involvement of women in the public planning process to create safer communities

76. key targets are:

- To raise awareness and understanding of domestic abuse in all its forms
- To increase the percentage of domestic abuse incidents reported to the police
- To work to ensure the ongoing safety of survivors of domestic abuse and the reduction of repeat victimisation
- To increase detection rates for domestic abuse in Thurrock
- To monitor the number of children either 'looked after', on the 'Child Protection Register' or considered to meet the Social Care threshold of 'Children in Need' where domestic abuse is indicated
- To ensure timely and appropriate referrals of women to support agencies

The Youth Crime/Anti-Crime Delivery Group

77. Recently formed to bridge the gap between the work of the Anti Social Behaviour group and the focus on young people as victims of crime.

Their key aims are:

- To reduce number of young people entering the criminal justice system
- To reduce re-offending of young people on 'Prevent & Deter' and 'Catch & Convict' lists (PPO Strategy)
- To reduce anti social behaviour of children & young people

Links to other Strategic Plans

78. During the development of the three year plan 2007-10 we will continue to secure improvements in outcomes during year one by the implementation of a range of strategic and delivery plans within and across the agencies.

These include:

The Teenage Pregnancy Plan:

79. Targets for 2006-2007

- Reduce teenage conception rates to a maximum of 34.8 per 1000 girls by the end of 2006
- Achieve at least a 55% reduction in levels of teenage conception between the base line year of 1998 and the end of 2010

Anti Social Behaviour Action Plan

80. Targets for 2005-2008

- Reduce overall reports of anti-social behaviour to police by 10%
- Reduce incidence of criminal damage by 25%
- Have 26% rise in incidences of graffiti being reported and effectively dealt with by Council street officers
- Reduce number of people identifying problems caused by youths as most significant fear by 10% on quality of life survey
- Reduce nuisance reports by 11%
- Reduce number of abandoned vehicles by 47%

The Plan to Raise Standards in Thurrock Schools (06-07)

81. Targets for 2006-2007

- Improvement in attainment in Maths, Reading, Writing and Science by end of Key Stage 1
- Secure attainment into interquartile or median range through improved performance by end of Key Stage 2, so that by 2007 attainment levels reach at least 73% Level 4+ in English and 75% level 4+ in Maths
- Improve overall attainment level and rate of progress by end of Key Stage 3 so that by 2007 attainment levels reach at least 73% level 5+ in English, 74% level 5+ in Maths, 71% level 5+ in Science and 79% level 5+ in ICT
- Secure attainment into interquartile or median compared to other schools nationally by regaining improvement, so that by 2007 at least 57% of pupils on roll attain 5 GCSE A* - C, with an average points score of 349 per pupil
- Develop and implement social inclusion strategy in order to
- Improve attendance rates into interquartile range

- Reduce fixed term exclusion rates
- Reduce variations in performance of certain groups
- Improve targeting of support to young people unlikely to access education, employment and training post 16

The School Organisation Plan (2003-2008)/Shaping Thurrock Education and Skills ten year strategy (2003-2013)

82. Strategic objectives

- All secondary schools and all large primary schools will be open at least 14 hours per day and for 50 weeks of the year
- All medium and small primary schools will host holiday play schemes and occasional theme weekend events for family learning
- Number of secondary schools to be maintained with at least 6 form entry and with provision to increase to eight form entry where appropriate
- Primary schools of at least two form entry to ensure access to wide range of staff expertise. Primary schools smaller than 2 form entry will be reconfigured through amalgamation or federation
- Identify three new school sites, two of which will use existing spaces
- A rolling programme of primary school extensions to incorporate space for family and community use
- Explore with Learning Skills Council development of further Higher Education provision in Thurrock
- Secure an Higher Education partner willing to invest in local provision

Thurrock Young People's Substance Misuse Plan (06-07)

83. Targets 06-07 TBC

Connexions LMC Plan

84. Targets for 2006

- To reduce total number of young people not in education, employment or training to 9%
- To reduce level of young people about whom it is not known whether or not they are in education, employment or training to 7%
- To reduce drop out to not in education, employment or training rate from post-16 education by 10%
- To reduce drop out to not in education, employment or training rate from work without training education by 10%
- Reduce those not in education, employment or training at end of Year 11 by 9%
- To establish partnership agreements in all Thurrock secondary schools and colleges
- To ensure take up on education maintenance allowances is at least at national level or better than take up in 04-05 (depending on which is lesser of the two)

The Borough Attendance Strategy

85. Targets for 2006-7

- Average of 5.2 half days of pupil absence in Primary Schools for 06-07
- Average of 7 half days of pupil absence in Secondary Schools for 06-07
- Average of 7.5 half days of pupil absence in Special Schools for 06-07

Thurrock 'Learning for all' Strategy

86. Targets for 14-19 Development by 2008

- 60% of pupils will achieve a level 2 qualification (5 good GCSE's or equivalent)
- No pupils will leave school without having achieved a qualification
- Young people not in education, employment or training will be reduced to a maximum of 7%

Transport Strategy

87. Strategic Objectives

- Generating more capacity in transport network for public transport, cycling and walking
- Implementing and promoting a network of safe and accessible routes for cyclists and pedestrians
- A Thurrock Cycle Strategy will be published as part of Local Transport Plan in 2006.
- Delivering better access to employment, health and education services, especially for disadvantaged groups and geographical areas and including better transport provision to post 16 education
- To have 100% of schools with School Travel Plans from a baseline of 75% in 2004-05
- To see 50% reduction against 94-98 base rate in child casualties within highway network by 2010/2011
- To reduce proportion of children travelling to school by car from base rate of 42% in 2004 to 35% by 2011
- Installation of CCTV on trains and school buses for improving personal safety

Housing Strategy

88. Targets

- Providing affordable private housing through key workers initiative to support recruitment of frontline public service workers
- Tackling homelessness for families and young people facing housing problems so that no homeless family is placed in bed and breakfast accommodation except in an emergency

- Meeting housing and support needs of homeless 16-17 year olds, young people leaving care and lone teenage parents, ensuring more teenage parents get education, training or employment to reduce risk of social exclusion/homelessness
- Ensuring improvements are made to the Borough's Housing stock to improve and safeguard environment and health and safety of our communities homes
- To eradicate fuel poverty for vulnerable groups by 2010 and for all social housing by 2016
- To ensure all social sector housing has "thermal comfort" to meet Decent Homes target of 2010
- Promoting community safety by developing links at neighbourhood level between housing management and other service providers such as education, social care and health services

Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy

89. Targets for 2008

- Reduce impact of anti-social behaviour on Thurrock residents including by targeting those most at risk of offending and liaising with schools
- Developing a strategy focused on substance misuse by young people through drug and alcohol education programmes and targeting those most at risk of offending
- Reducing % of residents who think youths causing a problem is their most significant fear by 10% by 2008.

Resources, Workforce development and the Capital Programme

Resources

90. The objectives of Every Child Matters and of this Plan are too broad to be achieved by a single agency. Clear arrangements need to be developed which will ensure that agencies pool their resources and commission relevant services that meet local needs. These arrangements will work within the CYPSP structure to ensure that services that have been jointly commissioned are effectively managed and lines of accountability are clear.

91. The partner agencies need to address the following issues together:

- How best to meet identified needs (including those identified by the voluntary sector, tested and led by the participation of children and young people, including how services can be designed to be outcome focused
- How best to allocate and use collective resources of all kinds to secure those services, from both statutory and non-statutory sources, against outcome-based targets
- The extent to which use needs to be made of Health Act flexibilities in formally pooling budgets
- What agreements, contracts and monitoring arrangements need to be put in place to ensure effective delivery and to influence planning activity

92. In order to reach agreement on local processes a conference has been organised on 29th March, 2006, for key local stakeholders.

Workforce Development

93. There is a commitment in Thurrock to the development of a workforce strategy that aims to improve the skills and knowledge of professionals, support the integration of delivery around the needs of the children and promote the development of strong leadership and management. We share the Children's Workforce Development Council's (CWDC) national vision to develop a workforce that:

- Strives to achieve the best possible outcomes for all children and young people, and to reduce inequalities between the most disadvantaged groups
- Is competent, confident and safe to work with children and young people
- People aspire to be part of and want to remain in where they can develop their skills and build satisfying and rewarding careers
- Parents, children and young people can trust and respect

94. Through our strategic workforce development group, and workforce planning service we will realise this vision by prioritising the following for 2006/08:

- To engage with all partners to develop a workforce strategy during 2006/07 in line with Government thinking and local needs with a particular focus on the integrated workforce.
- The implementation of a common induction programme, delivering the CWDC integrated standards across all relating services, laying the foundations of good practice and expectations of the directorate.
- Promoting shared opportunities for effective training to improve practice and maintain quality. All training and CPD activity would be underpinned by the DfES common core. We would continue to open up training provision to the private and voluntary sectors.
- A recruitment and retention strategy, with particular focus on current HR functions , increasing the commonality of skills and knowledge in order to establish improved career pathways
- strengthen safeguarding by the delivery of a comprehensive training strategy in the protection of children
- Continued development of foster carers with the attainment of national minimum standards to help improve outcomes for looked after children;
- strengthen leadership, management and supervision
- Establishing a more professional workforce in early years, providing accessible career development routes and encouraging graduate programmes
- A comprehensive analysis of the local children's workforce and skill mix

The Capital Programme

95. In order to realise the ambitions in the CYPP, investment in physical changes to buildings and ICT infrastructure will be required. Arrangements will need to be in place which:

- Anticipate the new ways of integrated working envisaged by Every Child Matters
- Ensure coherent local delivery, so that services can be brought close to users
- Provide appropriate, high quality and safe facilities for service users' needs
- Offer excellent flexible working facilities for staff
- Respond to the changes needed in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and co-ordinated data-bases
- Embrace and maximise the opportunities in the Borough that are driven by regeneration activity and respond to the needs of the developing community
- Enable all agencies to contribute towards planned capital investment in a coherent manner

96. The scope of this strategy includes:

- Accommodation for professionals to work with children, their families and carers
- Provision of informal spaces for young people, which reflect their wishes and needs, including confidential access to services
- School buildings that are well-located, suitable, sufficient and in good condition, to promote the delivery of the future curriculum alongside extended facilities intended to meet a wider range of personal and community needs
- Facilities for childcare and nursery education, developed within the national 10-year strategy for childcare
- A wide variety of good quality formal and informal recreational provision, on and off school sites
- All the ICT provision needed to secure effective delivery of future integrated services including access to databases which provide accurate management information and ensure the protection of vulnerable young people

Section 5: Interagency Governance

Governance

97. One of the key requirements of the Children's Act is that all Children's Services Authorities should have a Children's Trust in place by 2008. That is, set up (locally determined) effective appropriate and necessary systems and procedures, implement working practices, governance arrangements (collectively known as Children's Trust arrangements) which will enable the delivery of child centred integrated services to children young people and their families – to efficiently and effectively work together to improve children and young people's well being.
98. Effective governance arrangements are an important part of improving children's services. Notwithstanding that partners remain responsible for discharging their statutory responsibilities, within Thurrock, the Children's Trust governance arrangements (established in 2005) are outlined in Appendix 1 - these arrangements are facilitated the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board, membership of which includes senior leaders from all of our statutory partners. Examples include; the Police and Health Services, the Learning Skills Council, Private and Voluntary Sector organisations, together with representation by young people, parents, carers, governors, all of whom are collectively involved in developing strategy, plans and formal agreements. The Strategic Partnership Board, which meets quarterly and has clearly defined terms of reference, is supported/underpinned by the Children and Young People's Strategic Executive (which is jointly chaired by the Director of Children's Services and the Deputy Chief Executive of the Thurrock Primary Care Trust) – members of the executive group chair the three age based executive groups (all of whom meet monthly).
99. The current governance arrangements will be reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet changing local requirements and facilitate partnership working especially with the voluntary sector – a review of the current arrangements is a key action planned for 2006. In addition, there is a recognised need to ensure that children and young people are enabled to play a fuller participative role across the collective governance arrangement. Further developments (including the Youth Cabinet) to secure this are currently underway.

Performance Management

100. The Performance Management of the plan will be a crucial part of securing its success and ensuring that the children and young people of Thurrock get the services they require delivered to a standard of excellence to which they are entitled. It has three aspects
- Having the right ambitions and targets throughout the partnership
 - Having processes in place to secure their delivery
 - Having the right people with the talents and skills to deliver them
101. We will create a culture within the partnership within which we can all share the development of the common skills and values that are needed.

102. Performance will be monitored within the partnership and reported to the Board on a systematic basis.
103. Performance and service planning will remain within the control of the agencies but the strategic planning to deliver the performance improvements across the partnership will come within the remit of the Partnership.
104. Although all the partners involved in delivering children's services operate with very different highly regulated frameworks they are now subject to collective external independent performance review, monitoring and assessment. This aims to provide assurance to government ministers and the public about the safe and proper delivery of services, and the extent to which partners improve the well-being of children and young people and achieve value for money in that service delivery.
105. The collective partnership review is called the Joint Area Review and Thurrock's first Joint Area Review is to be undertaken in January 2007.

Partnership arrangements including those with a duty to co-operate

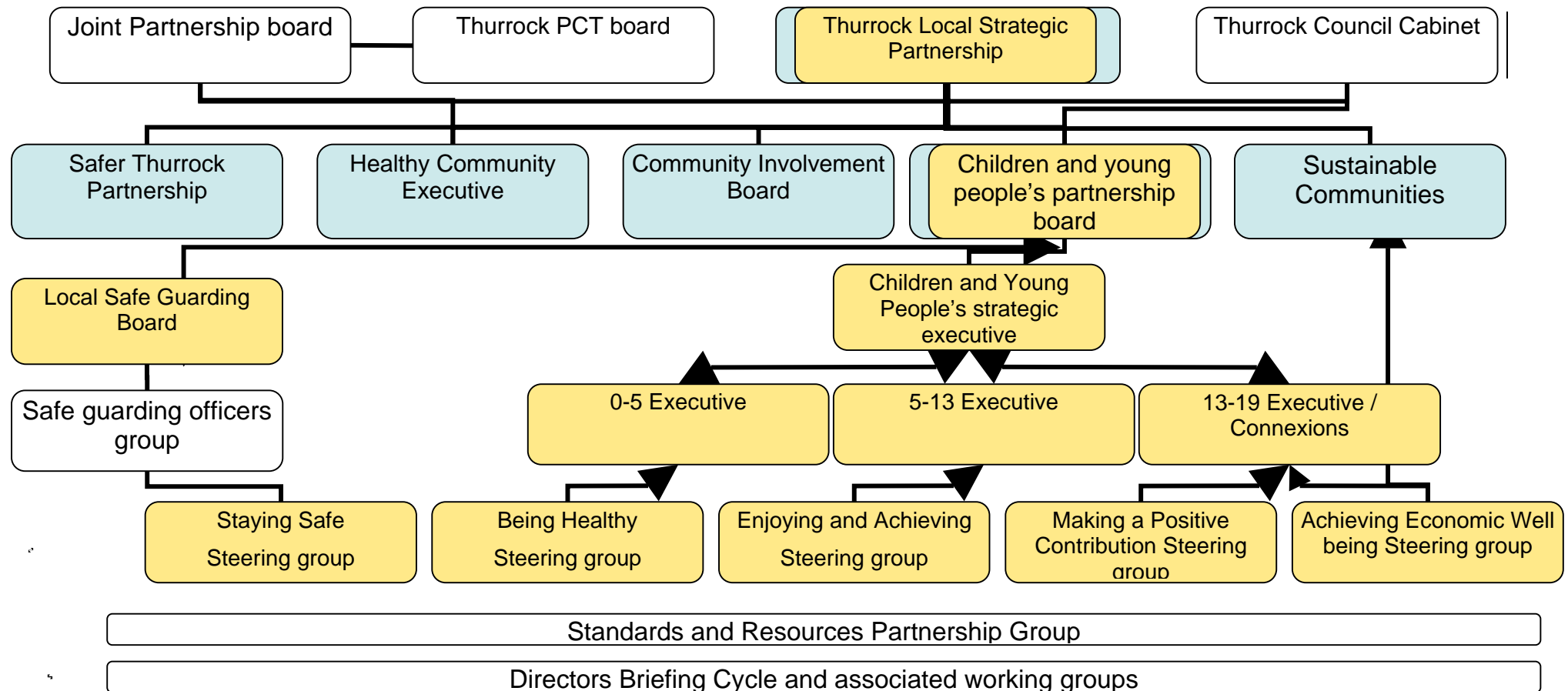
106. The Children and Young People's Partnership Board was established as a Quasi trust. If the decision was made to establish a formal Children's Trust in Thurrock it could readily be adapted to further the function.
107. Below the Board is a structure of partnership (appendix 1) which focuses on joint agency working to deliver the outcomes for all young people 0-25 and for those young people above 19 who are still entitled to services.
108. Individual agencies are accountable for the delivery of the strategic plans and the implementation of the plans is monitored and evaluated through the planning and implementation groups. Accountability is ultimately to the Board.
109. Stakeholder engagement goes well beyond those partners with a duty to co-operate and currently include schools, the voluntary agencies, the business community and most importantly children and young people. Nor is joint working limited to high level inter-agency governance and/or engagement at a strategic level but includes for example, front line staff and managers at various levels (including multi-disciplinary front-line teams).
110. There is a direct link between the Children's Board and the local strategic partnership. Within Thurrock it is recognised that well-being for all our communities, children and young people can only be achieved and sustained if all agencies work together in partnership in the design and delivery of integrated services based upon the needs of these children and young people (child centred services). Our consultations to date have shown that there is widespread support for this approach as well increasing evidence that a lot of good practice is already in place. For example, members of the community and voluntary sector are fully involved in the various associated partnership structures including the Children and Young People's Board. In addition, they play a major role in the provision of both Children and Young People's Services and Community Services; as well providing an invaluable source of 'intelligence' in informing 'community need'.

Involvement of Children and Young People in Governance

111. Thurrock's Community Involvement Board (which had its inaugural meeting on the 13th September 2005) is one of five Partnership Boards created under the Thurrock's new Local Strategic Partnership structure as outlined in appendix 1. It provides the crucial link between Thurrock's community, the Local Strategic Partnership, and related Partnership Boards, by ensuring that meaningful engagement and involvement occurs. The Community Involvement Board comprises representatives covering the spectrum of community and voluntary groups working in Thurrock. A key priority is to now facilitate representation from Thurrock's Youth Cabinet on each of these 5 partnership boards as well as ensuring that, all children and young people within Thurrock know how to have their voice 'heard'. At the young people's consultation event in July 200, 73% of young people stated that they understood how to have their voice heard through local community forums and the Youth Commission.
112. Children and young people were heavily involved in the development of the plan but we recognise the importance of involving them in delivering the plan and developing services for children and young people.
113. Working in conjunction with the recently established Youth Cabinet, we will develop a communication and consultation strategy, which will promote ongoing dialogue with children, young people including specific groups. The activities to ensure ongoing participation will be determined in conjunction with the Youth Cabinet, but are likely to include
- Using existing mechanisms such as School Councils
 - Agreeing common understanding at local level of "Participation", "Involvement", "Voice and Influence"
 - Specific events and activities to listen to views of children and young people especially those who are less likely to participate in forums like School Councils
 - Implementing the 'Hear by Right' standards
 - Identifying all possible workers who are a resource for ongoing dialogue and using their skills to ensure the voice of young people is heard across the age range
114. The key principles that will underpin the communication and consultation strategy will also be determined in conjunction with the Youth Cabinet, but will be focused around the themes of
- Involvement in making decisions about how services will be delivered
 - Giving chance to give views on services actually being accessed such as tailoring individual packages of support
 - Ways for children and young people to come together to share views with each other across age and geographical boundaries
 - Getting feedback to children and young people on changes made as a result of their views
 - Giving feedback to children and young people on the impact of their changes on outcomes

115. In addition information will be circulated annually to young people and their families indicating the action that has been taken in line with their responses to consultation and the impact that action has had.

Appendix 1: Thurrock Children's Trust Governance Arrangements



Thurrock Children's Plan 2006 to 2007
Appendix 1: Thurrock Children's Trust Governance Arrangement

Appendix 2: Entitlement Statement

OUTCOMES	BE HEALTHY	STAY SAFE	ENJOY & ACHIEVE	MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION	ACHIEVE ECONOMIC WELL-BEING
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE:					
AIMS	<p>Are physically healthy</p> <p>Are mentally and emotionally healthy</p> <p>Are sexually Healthy</p> <p>Live healthy lifestyles</p> <p>Choose not to take illegal drugs</p>	<p>Are safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation</p> <p>Are safe from accidental injury an death</p> <p>Are safe from bullying and discrimination</p> <p>Are safe from crime and anti-social behaviour in and out of school</p> <p>Have security, stability are cared for</p>	<p>Are ready for school</p> <p>Attend and enjoy school</p> <p>Achieve stretching national educational standards at primary school</p> <p>Achieve personal and social development and enjoy recreation</p> <p>Achieve stretching national educational standards at secondary school</p>	<p>Engage in decision making and support the community and environment</p> <p>Engage in law-abiding ad positive behaviour in and out of school</p> <p>Develop positive relationships and choose not to bully or discriminate</p> <p>Develop self-confidence and successfully deal with significant life changes and challenges</p> <p>Develop enterprising behaviour</p>	<p>Engage in further education, employment or training on leaving school</p> <p>Are Ready for employment</p> <p>Live in decent homes and sustainable communities</p> <p>Have access to transport and material goods</p> <p>Live in households free from low income</p>

