

in Cumbria Every Child Matters

CONSULTATION



Issue 1 August 2004

→ The way in which Children's Services are delivered throughout Cumbria is changing and we want to hear your views.

This first newsletter begins the process of sharing information and invites you to offer your views on the initial proposed key changes. It sets out to summarise what is happening at both national and local levels and starts the consultation process through which we are keen to seek your views.

Please send your comments to:
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→ The Children Bill

The Children Bill is the first step in a long-term programme of change. It creates the legislative spine for developing more effective and accessible services focused around the needs of children, young people and their families in the light of local circumstances.

Subject to the will of Parliament, the Children Bill will become Law by November

In summary, the Bill sets out to:

- Appoint a national **Children's Commissioner** by April 2005.
- Ensure broad local partnerships of interest to improve the well-being of children & young people – local authorities working closely with public, private, voluntary and community sectors, and with children, young people and families.
- **Safeguard Children** – the Bill requires each Local Authority to establish a statutory **Local Safeguarding Children Board**.
- **Develop Children's Trusts** by 2008.
- Appoint, at a local level, a **Director of Children's Services** and a **Director of Adult Services** by 2006
- Identify a **Lead Council member for Children's Services** by 2006.
- Develop an **Integrated Inspection Framework**.
- Improve the sharing of information across disciplines.

'The Children Bill' is available for download from www.cumbria.gov.uk

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→ Every Child Matters - The Vision

In September 2003 the Government published the Green paper **'Every Child Matters'**, and following wide ranging consultation, the **Children Bill** and **'Every Child Matters: Next Steps'** followed in the spring of 2004.

Cumbria County Council shares the Government's vision:

Every child will have the opportunity to fulfil their potential, and no child will slip through the net.

We want to help children and young people to:

- **Be healthy:** enjoying good physical and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle;
- **Stay safe:** being protected from harm and neglect and growing able to look after themselves;
- **Enjoy and achieve:** getting the most out of life and developing broad skills for adulthood;
- **Make a positive contribution:** to the community and to society and not engaging in anti-social or offending behaviour;
- **Achieve economic well-being.**

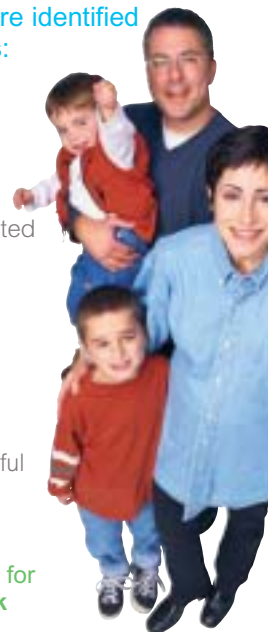
'Every Child Matters' is available for download from www.cumbria.gov.uk

→ From Vision to Reality

In the publication **'From vision to reality: transforming outcomes for children and families'**, four guiding principles are identified to underpin the proposed changes:

- 1) Partnership – working with public, voluntary, private and independent sectors.
- 2) Leadership – people who are recognised, respected and mandated to create change by stakeholders.
- 3) Managing change – the local authority's role is to lead community change and time must be spent in the community capacity building.
- 4) Learning and evaluation – each step needs to build on good practice, useful data and evidence, and the experience of others.

'From Vision to Reality' is available for download from www.cumbria.gov.uk



→ Every Child Matters in Cumbria

Cumbria Social Services and Education Service are already working closely together to create Integrated Children's Services, and Cumbria County Council agreed a set of Children's Service developmental principles in July 2004. The key principle states that:

The rights of children and young people are paramount and this principle will underpin everything we do. Any developments will have to demonstrate clear benefits for young people and their families.

The Children's Service Principles are available for download from www.cumbria.gov.uk

→ Project Officer - Children's Services

Michael Blakey has been appointed to the post of Project Officer - Children's Services and is working across Social Services and Education, with the following initial priorities:

- Engaging Children & Young People in the consultation process to seek their views on what a future Children's Service might look and feel like.
- Consulting on the development of a Vision for Children's Services in Cumbria.
- Developing and distributing information on the progress of the development of Children's Services.

→ Children's Service Panel – Development & Improvement

A County Council members' panel already exists in Cumbria for Developing & Improving Children's Services. Senior Officers from Social Services and Education attend with representatives from Health Services. The panel has a balanced representation from all three major political parties and is chaired by Cabinet Members.

→ Children's Services and Related Corporate Restructuring.

An officer group has been established to advise the Children's Services Panel about the remit for the new Children's Services Directorate and to propose related or consequential changes for other directorates.

The Corporate Director - Education, is the lead Officer for the changes relating to Children. The group, which has a remit to look at the wider changes across the Council, will be chaired by an Officer from outside the affected Directorates.

→ Integrated Services: YOUR VIEWS REQUESTED

The Children Bill, when it becomes an Act, will abolish the (1944) requirement on Local Authorities to have a Director of Education and replace it with a requirement to have a Director of Children's Services. The corollary will be that there will no longer be a Director of Social Services and Adult Social Services will have to have a separate Directorate.

This offers various possibilities to a Local Authority – including leaving Social Services and Education with separate Directors and designating the Chief Executive or a Deputy Chief Executive as Director of Children's Services.

However, in Cumbria, members are currently considering creating two new posts: a Director of Children's Services - possibly "Children, Families and Schools" or "Education, Children and Families" – in place of the post of Director of Education and a Director of Adult Services with a newly defined range of responsibilities.

We are keen to seek your views on this preferred option and encourage you to send your comments to:
michael.blakey@cumbriacc.gov.uk

Children & Young People Strategic Partnership

The CYPSP, Chaired by the County Council, meets regularly with key representatives from Social Services, Education, Connexions, Cumbria Police, Morecambe Bay Primary Care Trust, Howgill Family Centre West Cumbria Partnership, Local Strategic Partnerships, Barrow Community Learning Partnership, North Cumbria Health Authority, Youth Offending Team, Children's Fund and other organisations working with children & young people in Cumbria.

The Children & Young People Strategic Partnership will be crucial in the development of a future Children's Trust in Cumbria.

→ Information Sharing Protocol

Dave Todd, of Connexions Cumbria, is currently developing an Information Sharing Protocol. This protocol will be the framework document for partners, which sets out the rules, values and principles for information sharing between organisations irrespective of the purpose.

→ Every Child Matters - Our Next Steps:

A wider consultation programme will take place in Cumbria in the autumn, and we look forward to seeking your subsequent views on developing integrated Children's Services.

