

PEOPLE (CHILDREN) SCRUTINY PANEL

13 November 2014

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

Report of the Director for People

STRATEGIC AIM:	Creating a Brighter Future for All
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1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides background information on the context and current position regarding the Children and Young People's Participation Strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That Scrutiny Panel note the content of the report.**

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 This paper links to the following:
- Meeting the Health and Well Being Needs of the Community
 - Creating Brighter Future for All
 - Quality Assurance Framework

- 3.2 In response to the 'Safeguarding' inspection from Ofsted, SAV and Peer Challenge visits between 2012 and 2014 a number of internal sub groups reporting to the Children's Trust were developed across three themes:

- Participation
- Performance
- Quality Assurance

These groups were chaired by Assistant Directors with terms of reference developed defining the remit of the groups. Compulsory attendance was required of Heads of service with other invited guests as and when appropriate. A decision was made to retain the groups as internal until the council had developed a baseline for partners to contribute to.

- 3.3 The 'Participation' sub group is led by Wendy Poynton, Assistant Director. Initially the remit of the group was to develop a strategy across children, young people and adults with partner involvement which would be endorsed by the Children's Trust. Through discussions in the group, it was agreed to focus on a strategy for children and young people only as participation and engagement within adult services in the council was under developed and required further work.

- 3.4** Participation creates opportunities for children and young people to be involved in decision making processes on issues which affect them. It is about listening to what matters most to children and young people and taking their views seriously.
- 3.5** This strategy provides a framework for the participation and engagement of children and young people in Rutland. Listening to and acting on the views of children is essential for the development of relevant and effective services. This applies to services provided uniquely to children and young people and those provided to the community as a whole.

The principles give organizations, and teams within organisations, the opportunity to express their commitment to four key principles of participation:

- Children and young people have equal opportunity to be involved
- Children and young people are valued
- The involvement of children and young people is a visible commitment which is properly resourced.
- The involvement of children and young people is monitored, evaluated, reported and improved.

- 3.6** The strategy provides examples of participation across the council and a pledge to work with cyp at least level 6 of Roger Harts 'Ladder of Participation'.
- 3.7** Over a series of four sessions, the draft strategy has been developed in full consultation with young people as with their views and comments fully incorporated. Following discussion with the Director of People, it has been agreed that this strategy will remain for children and young people but with partner's involvement to reflect the Children's Trust membership and vision. In the absence of the Assistant Director this has been picked up by the Head of Service for Stronger Communities.
- 3.8** In developing the strategy it is clear to see that a gap for the council is engagement of children aged under 11 in active participation. There is also a need to develop this further with partners with regards to their current processes to reflect a wider contribution to the strategy and what the priorities should be. However the Head of Service will be leaving the authority on the 3rd October therefore someone else will need to be identified to continue this work.
- 3.9** There are no financial implications regarding the implementation of this strategy. The development of processes required to ensure the council and its partners to engage children and young people in decision making and consultation may require some resource. However this is unknown at this stage.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

RISK	IMPACT	COMMENTS
Time	H	Further work is required to engage partners and define the priorities for the next year. However with the absence of a Head of Service for Early Help to oversee and monitor this, there may be delays.
Viability	M	Once completed the implementation of the strategy should be straightforward. However with the absence of a Head of Service for Early Help to oversee and monitor this, there may be delays.
Finance	L	There are no financial implications regarding the implementation of this strategy. Work required should be part of existing resources.
Profile	H	Recent inspections and policy/practice changes have highlighted the need for local authorities to ensure there are robust processes in place to engage children and young people in decision making and consultation.
Equality and Diversity	L	The strategy will seek to incorporate all aspects of equality and diversity.

Report Author
Colin Pennington

Tel No: (01572) 722577
E-mail: enquiries@rutland.gov.uk

A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.