



EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 25TH SEPTEMBER 2012

SUBJECT: PROPOSALS FOR THE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE LOCAL PARTICIPATION ACTION PLAN

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR – EDUCATION & LIFELONG LEARNING

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the forthcoming statutory requirements from Welsh Government requiring Local Authorities to produce Local Participation Action Plans (LPAP).
- 1.2 The report sets out proposals and a timeframe for developing the Local Participation Action Plan (LPAP) in partnership with Blaenau Gwent.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Welsh Government are due to issue statutory guidance which will place a duty on Local Authorities to produce an Action Plan that sets out how the participation of children and young people in decision-making will be developed. It is proposed that the development of the Action Plan will be taken forward on a regional basis in partnership with Blaenau Gwent in order to realise the benefits of shared expertise, capacity and resources.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 Children and Young People's Participation Strategy for Caerphilly County Borough 2008-2011.
- 3.2 The Citizen Engagement Strategy.
- 3.3 The Children & Young Peoples Plan 2011-2014, where participation provides the foundation upon which the Plan is built – stating that 'All children and young people are listened to and are treated with respect.

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 In November 2011, The Welsh Government issued draft guidance on *Local Participation Strategies* that would place a statutory requirement on local authorities and key partners to produce a Local Participation Strategy for children and young people. Following a period of consultation on the draft guidance, in February 2012 Welsh Government Officers informed the national Participation Coordinators Group that revised guidance to be issued in 2012 would change considerably in light of consultation responses and the Single Integrated Planning Guidance.

4.2 The revised guidance, to be entitled '*Citizens Now, Local Participation Action Planning Guidance*' will be aimed at Local Service Boards (LSB) and local partners with the aim of ensuring that children and young people's participation in decision-making (as defined in Article 12) is integrated and embedded into every aspect of planning, delivery and evaluation of services. The legislative basis for this guidance is contained in Section 12 of the Children and Families Measure (2010) which states that:

- (1) *A local authority must make such arrangements as it considers suitable to promote and facilitate participation by children in decisions of the authority, which might affect them.*
- (2) *A local authority must -*
 - (a) *publish information about its arrangements under subsection (1), and*
 - (b) *keep the information published up to date.*

4.3 In order to meet the requirements of the legislation, LSBs and local partners will be required to:

- promote and facilitate participation within the broader context of children and young people's rights and work that is being done to take this agenda forward locally;
- integrate children and young people's participation into all aspects of planning, delivering and reviewing services in a way that informs the Single Integrated Plan; and
- develop and implement a Local Participation Action Plan that sets out:
 - its intentions in enabling children and young people to have a voice and be involved in decision-making at a local level;
 - the desired well-defined outcomes of young people's participation – so that they feel listened to and empowered, and benefit from services which better meet their needs;
 - what local partners will do to promote and facilitate the participation of children and young people in planning, delivering and reviewing services, and
 - how this will contribute to local authority priorities and the priorities of the Single Integrated Plan.

4.4 **The Local Participation Action Plan (LPAP) and the Single Integrated Plan:**

The statutory guidance for the LPAP will be issued over the coming months as an appendix to the guidance for Single Integrated Plans (Shared Purpose - Shared Delivery), issued in June 2012. The essential elements of a LPAP will be set out in terms of outcomes, actions, accountability and evidence. It is made clear that the LSBs and partners should employ an outcomes focus.

It is proposed that a further section will outline how children and young people's participation should be integrated into every part of the Single Integrated Plan, using the same headings and wordings as those adopted in "Shared Purpose, Shared Delivery".

The timescales will stipulate that all LSBs must have a LPAP in place, aligned to their Single Integrated Plan, by April 2013.

5. **THE REPORT**

5.1. The report outlines a proposal to develop the LPAP in partnership with colleagues from Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (BGCBC), and specifically colleagues who facilitate Children and Young People's Participation. Links with Officers responsible for developing the Single Integrated Plan will be an integral part of the process.

5.2. Initial areas for joint working that will be developed as a part of the LPAP have been identified, of which are areas that would strengthen opportunities and processes for enabling children and young peoples participation in decision-making and realise the recognised benefits from sharing resources, expertise and capacity. The list below provides an example of areas of work where regional collaboration may take place. However, any resulting actions would need

to be based on evidence of need, national requirements and the outcomes of the consultation process.

- Joint Working Group to take forward the LPAP
- Shared Training Programme to support partners, practitioners, Governors etc to develop participative practice.
- Sharing of resources to support the development of local practice, e.g. The Toolkit.
- Shared opportunities for children and young people in the CCBC Junior Forum, BGCBC Children's Council, CCBC Youth Forum and BGCBC Grand Council. This would include joint consultations that may support regional developments, regional service provision and national consultations, training and skills development of children and young people, and young person led projects and various other activities.
- Joint development of a framework and model of delivery to enable the implementation of the National Participation Standards kite mark and Young Inspectors Scheme.
- Joint approach to respond to the requirements to promote and raise awareness of children and young peoples rights and the opportunities to participate in decision-making, e.g. production of marketing & promotional materials, the use of social media.
- Joint approach to developing Self Evaluation processes and outcomes based performance measurement.

5.3. The time frame for developing a regional LPAP is outlined below:

March 2012	Report to Director
April 2012	Review of the Participation Strategy 2008-2011
May 2012	Planning the needs assessment and consultation process
June 2012	Consultation workshops with Children and Young People
July 2012	Collation and analysis of data from local Participation Strategy review, children and young people's consultation feedback, national requirements, local requirements (e.g. CYP Plan, Single Integrated Plan and the Public Engagement Strategy).
August 2012	
September 2012	Draft LPAP
October 2012	Consultation on draft LPAP
November 2012	
December 2012	
January 2013	Report to CYPPB and LSB
February 2013	Finalising LPAP
March 2013	Sign-off of LPAP
April 2013	LPAP that feeds into the CYP Plan and the Single Integrated Plan

6. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct equalities implications to this report, therefore no Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 At this stage, there are no financial implications arising out of this report.

8. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no personnel implications arising out of this report.

9. CONSULTATIONS

9.1. The comments of all consultees are reflected in this report.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Members note the content of this report.

11. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 This report is for Member's information.

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