

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by the Director of Community Health and Care Partnership

Community Health and Care Partnership Committee: 21st September 2011

Subject: West Dunbartonshire Parenting Strategy

1. Purpose

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to outline the purpose of the attached local Parenting Strategy, and to ask the CHCP Committee to approve it for implementation.

2. Background

- 2.1** The 2008 national Early Years Framework highlights the importance of all national and local agencies working together to deliver improved outcomes for our children. The key messages within that Framework concern effective prevention and early intervention; the importance of the early years determining a child's future life chances; the need to shift the emphasis to enable families to support themselves within their communities; and the vital role of universal services in delivering improved outcomes for children and young people. A key element of the Framework is the importance of providing effective and locally appropriate support to parents.
- 2.2** The CHCP Strategic Plan 2012-13 included an explicit objective to deliver a Parenting Strategy on behalf of the local Community Planning Partnership (CPP), reflecting the corporate commitments of West Dunbartonshire Council and NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde, as well as that of the CPP, in supporting relevant outcomes within the current Single Outcome Agreement.
- 2.3** This Strategy is presented to the CHCP Committee for approval (as committed to within the CHCP Forward Plan agreed by the Committee at its February 2011 meeting) following a period of extensive stakeholder consultation.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** Positive parenting has a strong and beneficial impact on children's prospects, with parents having more influence than anyone else on how a child develops and the adult they will become. Where families are struggling, to whatever level, parenting interventions can be crucial in enabling them to confidently meet the needs of their children.
- 3.2** Across West Dunbartonshire, local services have a strong track-record in supporting positive parenting; and in developing interventions in a collaborative manner. In building upon the good work undertaken to date, this

Strategy has been developed to ensure our continuing efforts reflect local needs alongside national guidance in a manner that is explicitly integrated, evidence-based and sustainable. In this way we will ensure that we continue to deliver on our commitment to improve the lives of children and young people across all the communities of the West Dunbartonshire area.

- 3.3** This strategy aims to improve the co-ordination, integration and delivery of parenting programmes in West Dunbartonshire. The Strategy does this by setting out how West Dunbartonshire Community Planning Partnership – and most notably West Dunbartonshire Council and West Dunbartonshire Community Health & Care Partnership (on behalf of NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde) – will work to enable parents to raise healthy and achieving children and young people (i.e. those aged 18 years or less) through the provision of a comprehensive suite of parenting interventions.
- 3.4** Parenting support in West Dunbartonshire needs to reflect the varied needs of families for help in raising their children, from short-term universal support to more intensive services. To be successful, this requires appropriate and proportionate support for parents and children when they need it from across professional disciplines, services and organisations that are both evidence-based and outcome-focused.
- 3.5** We are committed to delivering a staged model of parenting intervention that reflects the age and needs of child, young people and parents (as set out within the Strategy). At the core of our local approach is an emphasis on supporting and reinforcing *attachment* and *resilience*; and emphasising opportunities for *nurturing* throughout a child and young person's development.
- 3.6** This model provides parenting support at four levels of service:
- Providing Public information and contact for all parents of pre-school children;
 - Universal support for all new parents in West Dunbartonshire, crucially through the Health visiting service;
 - Targeted resources for parents where it is identified that more support is required;
 - Intensive programmes of support for families in greater need provided through the multi-agency partnership approach.
- 3.7** A crucial element of delivering this staged model involves ensuring that parents are engaged and involved in developing services, both in terms of their perspectives and experiences of services.

4. People Implications

- 4.1** The Parenting Strategy will be delivered through existing services and provision. There are no people implications related to this report over and above routine awareness raising and training/professional development for staff.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** The Parenting Strategy itself has no financial implications as it provides a strategic framework in which parenting support work will be delivered: most of the parenting support is delivered through the work of mainstream services. There is currently some additional resource provided from non-recurrent Community Planning Partnership funds for dedicated time from within the CHCP to support development of the practitioner work and practitioner training (£50,000 per annum). Removal of this support would have an impact on the capacity of the service to continue the level of parenting work, and on our ability to deliver key training across children's services.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1** As noted earlier, effective prevention and early intervention is vital in ensuring that children and young people have positive outcomes. Failure to support parents to give their children the best start in life, and to continue to nurture and support them into adulthood, would risk poorer outcomes for children and young people, particularly within the context of current SOA priorities.

7. Equalities, Health & Human Rights Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 7.1** An Equalities, Health and Human Rights Impact Assessment (EIA) undertaken on the Strategy indicated no negative issues; and the person-centred/personalisation element of the model in particular was suggestive of the Strategy having a positive impact in these regards.

8. Strategic Assessment

- 8.1** Parenting support for families to improve outcomes for children and young people is a key element in achieving progress on the Strategic Priorities, particularly in relation to support for children but, more widely, in having a positive impact on reducing anti-social behaviour and improving attainment and achievement.

9. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 9.1** This strategy makes an important statement about commitment to supporting parents and provides a framework within which work with parents will be delivered. Most strands of the strategy are already in place, and there are some excellent examples of support to parents being undertaken at both a single agency and integrated agency level – these provide a robust foundation going forward.
- 9.2** The strategy has now been endorsed by the Joint Strategy Group for Children's Services and the CPP Education and Lifelong Learning Thematic group. The implementation and further development of the Strategy will be monitored by both of those groups; and supported by the Parenting Review and Improvement Group.

- 9.3** When the anticipated national Parenting Strategy is launched, the opportunity will be taken to review the West Dunbartonshire Parenting Strategy and to ensure alignment.
- 9.4** The CHCP Committee is therefore asked to approve the West Dunbartonshire Parenting Strategy; and to commend the work of staff involved in its development.

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Date: 31 August 2011

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Appendix 1: West Dunbartonshire Parenting Strategy

Background Papers: None

Wards Affected: All