

<b>item:</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>report:</b>	CYP06/09

## **FOR HIGHLAND'S CHILDREN 3 - UPDATE**

### **by Innis Mitchell**

#### **Summary**

This report updates on the developing framework and detailed content of *For Highland's Children 3*. A full draft of the Plan is to be prepared for consideration in Spring 2009.

#### **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Joint Committee agreed on 28th November 2008 a programme of formal approval for the improvement objectives and associated actions of each Strategy Group. This will take place on a phased basis over the life-time of the Plan.
- 1.2 The work of the current strategy groups is ongoing and all new proposed Improvement Objectives for *For Highland's Children 3 (FHC3)* will be included in the draft plan scheduled for Spring 2008.
- 1.3 The phased formal approval process will provide enhanced opportunity for the Joint Committee to closely examine each strategy and debate significant commitments in detail.
- 1.4 A key objective of the approval process is to allow strategic groups the opportunity to establish clear policies on consultation and participation with service users on their strategic planning, monitoring and updating of progress.
- 1.5 An important additional benefit, of the requirement for robust evidence of consultation and participation, will be increased front-line engagement with the strategic objectives and associated actions.

#### **2. Key Outcome Targets**

- 2.1 Work has begun on the selection of Key Outcome Targets for FHC3. Each target is selected to provide quantifiable evidence of quality improvement in services where the service objective is to achieve better outcomes for Highland's children and families.
- 2.2 Joint Committee will want to consider revised criteria for the selection of the targets for *FHC3*. While it is possible that some targets may be unique to *FHC3* (reflecting new policy directives) this is much less likely

than was the case in *FHC2*. With the development in recent years of the Highland Council Corporate Plan, HEAT targets and Single Outcome Agreement, there is now an established range of multi-agency outcomes with appropriate cross-cutting performance measures. This allows the selection of targets for *FHC3* to be more focussed and smaller in number. Care must also be taken before confirming any particular target that relevant data is obtainable and reliable.

- 2.3 Mapping and cross-referencing has been completed for all existing children's services measures. Work has yet to be done to match these with new Health (HEAT) targets.
- 2.4 *FHC2* had 50 targets with a total of over 90 separate measures. It is recommended that in *FHC3* each target is a single measure, rather than multiple measures and that there is a significantly reduced total number of measures
- 2.5 As in *FHC2* the targets will be grouped under the most appropriate theme of *SAFE, HEALTHY, ACHIEVING, NURTURED, ACTIVE, REPECTED & RESPONSIBLE and INCLUDED* (SHANARI). It is proposed that monitoring and reporting of the targets and the Improvement Objectives and Actions will be more closely linked than is the practice in *FHC2*. This will improve the evaluation of progress against the SHANARI themes and facilitate more robust planning as a regular feature of the strategy groups.

### **3. Strategy Groups**

- 3.1 A final list of strategic groups has yet to be confirmed. Because of changing service requirements, new legislation and pressures on resource allocation, this can not be a static situation.
- 3.2 Strategy Groups address cross-cutting service requirements but, for a variety of reasons, these groups are not always reflected in existing agency structures.
- 3.3 An important consideration is the size and scope of each strategy group. The *FHC3* Lead Officers Group links the work of all the strategy groups. However there is also important linking between particular groups.
- 3.4 There is a particular challenge in managing a coherent strategy for early year's services. This is readily demonstrated in the recent publication of the Early Years Framework by the Scottish Government and COSLA. This document covers childcare, pre-school provision and a wide spectrum of key health services for mothers, children from pre-birth to 8 years and family concerns. The Framework stresses the importance of prevention and early intervention and the links to child

protection, parental substance misuse, low achievement and poor health. Pragmatic decisions will require to be made about how this broad set of objectives is reflected in a manageable strategic infrastructure.

#### **4. Approval by Joint Committee**

- 4.1 A programme of presentation for approval of each strategy by the Joint Committee will be drawn up showing when each group will present its strategy paper detailing the proposed Improvement Objectives and associated Actions.
- 4.2 Each strategy group will highlight its arrangements for consultation and participation with service users. Negotiations are underway with Highland Youth Voice and Highland Children's Forum to provide a supportive structure on consultation and participation to assist each strategy group meet this requirement.
- 4.3 Following formal approval by the Joint Committee, each strategy group's Improvement Objectives and associated Actions will be included in the full web-site version of *For Highland's Children*.
- 4.4 It is proposed that the published version of *FHC3* will list all the Improvement Objectives under each of the SHANARI themes. The web-site version will show these under the appropriate Strategy Group but can also display them under SHANARI themes as required.

#### **Recommendation**

The Joint Committee is asked to;

- i. note the developing Framework for *FHC3*;
- ii. consider the principles and proposals for selecting new Key Outcome Targets.

**Innis Mitchell**

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